

History of the
First Presbyterian Church
1846-1960

Including Fort Smith and the Early Churches



By

Sydney Yantis Warner

Virginia Louise Foster

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*One generation passeth away, and another
generation cometh: but the earth abideth
forever.*

Ecclesiastes 1:4

DEDICATED TO

Dr. Thomas Burke Gallaher

Whose Interest was the Inspiration for this Book



Dr. Thomas Burke Gallaher

P R E F A C E

June 1958, the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith appointed a committee of three to write a history of the Church. We felt we were unqualified, but approached the task humbly and prayerfully. The result of our work is an informal history. Perhaps an explanation should be given for the method we have used in presenting it for the consideration of the members of the Church.

After studying all the available church records and other historical sources, we discovered we could not separate ourselves from the early history of other churches, our town, and our State. We are using no original or heretofore unpublished facts. By incorporating some of this material with our church records, we feel this book will be of use and interest, and we hope inspiration for those whose forefathers lived and made this history.

We pay special tribute to the following people of Fort Smith and Van Buren, without whose help in writing, preserving and developing our history this book would not be possible:

1. Fadjo Cravens, Jr.
2. G. Byron Dobbs
3. Miss Clara B. Eno, Crawford County
4. Mrs. Lora Gaines Goolsby
5. Mrs. Ashley Johnson
6. Mrs. Helen Cooke Johnson
7. Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Park, Crawford County
8. Miss Phoebe Parke
9. J. Fred Patton
10. J. Frank Weaver
11. Paul Wolfe

We have checked historical facts and dates in: "Centennial History of Arkansas" by Dallas Herndon; "History of the Presbyterian Church in Arkansas" by James Wilson Moore; "History of Arkansas" by John Gould Fletcher; "History and Beliefs of the Presbyterian Church" by Walter Lingle, D.D.; Church records in Fort Smith; old newspaper files—"Arkansas Gazette," "Fort Smith Times Record," "New Era," "The Herald," and records in Carnegie Library in Fort Smith.

We wish to thank Mrs. Duke Frederick for typing and Miss Mary Hynes for help in revising the manuscript. Many others gave us valuable assistance.

Randolph Sengel, Chairman
Virginia Louise Foster
Sydney Yantis Warner

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Virginia Louise Foster

THE CHURCH

The Church universal includes all of those for whom Christ died and who are moved by the Spirit to accept His atonement. It is a great host which cannot be numbered for multitude, and yet each person has his name written individually in the Lamb's book of life.

This Church is very dear to the Lord Jesus. He gave Himself for it. His purpose is that it may be glorious in life and service, not having spot or wrinkle, but holy and without blemish.

The visible Church, while falling far short of the Lord's purpose for it, and while divided into many denominations and other groups, is nevertheless His chosen instrument for enlisting those who should begin discipleship and for nourishing their faith as they grow in grace. Its purpose is to witness for Him.

In spite of its imperfections, and of the shortcomings of its leaders, we recognize it as His instrument and we will give to it our best support as unto the Master Himself.

J. R. McCain

HISTORY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1846 - 1960, Fort Smith, Arkansas

INCLUDING

FORT SMITH AND THE EARLY CHURCHES

PART I

To write the history of a church, especially a church whose history dates back a hundred and fourteen years, is a most difficult task. The pioneers who founded the early church organization are no longer alive to tell their story, church records have been lost or destroyed, pastors have come and gone, and in whatever direction the writer turns he finds himself confronted by obstacles.

Moreover, those who are members of a church organization are probably acquainted with the leading facts connected with their own church, but they are not especially interested in the history of other denominations. Fort Smith is an old town, dating back to 1817, so the history and development of our church should be placed against the background history of the state and also the town in which it was organized.

The First Presbyterian Church in Fort Smith, Arkansas, did not suddenly spring into being, full grown. Steps were taken and trails were blazed by brave men who brought the story of the Cross and the Divine Saviour to our State several hundreds of years ago and we should pause to give thanks to them and recognize the work they did before we proceed with the story of our Church. It is precisely that question—"What did men **do** there?"—that animates every worthwhile examination of the American past.

History after all is the story of people, a statement that might seem too obvious to be worth making if it were not for the fact that history so often is presented in terms of vast incomprehensible forces, moving far under the surface, carrying human beings along helpless and making them conform to a pattern whose true shape they never see. The pattern does exist, often enough, and it is important to trace it, yet it is good to remember that it is the people who make the pattern and not the other way around. Only God can know what motive or what impels a man to take the steps he does.

Spain was a Catholic nation when Columbus discovered America. Wherever the Spanish explorers went they were accompanied by one or more priests. In the ceremony of taking possession of newly discovered country, a Cross, the emblem of the Catholic church, was raised and somewhere in the ceremony were the words "His Catholic Majesty." One of these Crosses was set up by Hernando de Soto on the St. Francis River in 1541. Some sort of religious instruction was given to the Indians at that time. Many years later when other white people came that way, they saw a cross enclosed by a stockade placed there by the Indians.

The French Catholics were more zealous and consistent in their missionary work among the red men. In July 1673, Father Jacques Marquette, a Jesuit, visited the Quapaw villages near the mouth of the Arkansas River. At the same place Father Zenobe Membre, a Franciscan priest who accompanied LaSalle's expedition down the Mississippi River celebrated Mass on March 13, 1682— Father Membre also gave religious instruction to the Quapaw chiefs and paved the way for all the other missionaries who followed after him. Arkansas Post was settled in the spring of 1686. On November 20, 1689, Henri Tonti (Catholic Commandant of St. Louis) near the present city of LaSalle, Illinois, granted Father Claude Deblon a site for a mission near Arkansas Post. Various attempts to establish permanent missions in the Mississippi Valley resulted only in the martyrdom of several missionaries.

Soon after the establishment of the first French settlements along the Gulf Coast, communication by way of the Mississippi and the Great Lakes was opened up and the priests became regular visitors to the Osage and Quapaw tribes. There were many other powerful and warlike tribes in the country of the Arkansas, but the tribal names of the Choctaw, the Quapaw, the Chickasaw were left for other uses. The one tribe thus to be forever perpetuated in the memory of mankind by a mighty river and a proud state was the Arkansas.

Under the French domination the Archbishop of Quebec governed the Louisiana Territory. Louisiana was ceded to Spain in 1762 and from that time until 1800 the province was under control of the Archbishop of Cuba.

Passing over the period of the Spanish domination, the Treaty of Paris, signed April 30, 1803, which transferred Louisiana to the United States provided, that "the inhabitants should be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty, property, and the religion which they profess." This transfer of land from France to the United States is known as the Louisiana Purchase, and Arkansas was included in it.

The facts seems to be pretty well established that the first Protestant sermon, in what is now the State of Arkansas, was preached at Arkansas Post in 1811 by The Rev. John P. Carnahan, a member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Mr. Carnahan subsequently became a resident of the Pyeatt settlement at Crystal Hill where his daughter was married to Henry Pyeatt on February 10, 1820. This pioneer preacher conducted the first camp meeting in Arkansas. It was opened on Friday, May 24, 1822 and continued for five days, "with good results for the cause of Christianity." The meeting was held on a farm of Major John Pyeatt. Another camp meeting was held at the same place beginning on May 15, 1825, in which Mr. Carnahan was assisted by Rev. Robert Sloane. The Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Little Rock placed in its house of worship a memorial window in honor of this pioneer preacher. Mr. John H. Carnahan, a descendant, was treasurer and deacon of the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith for over thirty-five years.

The first Fort Smith. Erected in 1817.



The First Fort Smith—Erected 1817



Fort Smith, Arkansas in 1821
Painted by Samuel Seymour, Landscape Painter with Major S. H. Long's
Expedition. Original in National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.

The history of Presbyterianism in Arkansas must necessarily be, to a large extent, the lives of the men, especially of the ministers and the ruling elders who have lived and acted in the church since it was planted on the soil, first of the Territory and afterwards of the State of Arkansas. We must remember, too, that the Presbyterian Church was planted here on what was at that time foreign mission ground. The history of what is now known as the First Church of Little Rock was for many years the history of our church in Arkansas. This is the Mother Church and here the blue banner of Presbyterianism was first flung out on the breeze. This church was organized in July 1828 by James Wilson Moore. The second Presbyterian minister who settled in Arkansas was Rev. Dr. Daniel L. Gray. He came to the Territory about 1832 and settled with a small colony of Presbyterians in Jackson County and organized a church in November 1833. The third Presbyterian minister in the state was Rev. R. R. Banks who arrived from South Carolina in 1836. About 1838 he organized a church in Hempstead County.

Now let us turn the pages and review the early history of that section of the State of most concern and interest to us. The settlement of Arkansas remained a portion of the Territory of Louisiana until 1812, when it was made a part of the Territory of Missouri, and so remained until 1819 when it was organized into the Territory of Arkansas.

Belle Point, a beautiful spot at the confluence of the Arkansas and Poteau Rivers, was a well known haven for voyageurs on the river over a hundred and fifty years ago when enterprising young Frenchmen who lived at the Arkansas Post made trips up and down the Arkansas River trading trinkets to the Indians for their furs. Although they boated higher up to the plains and gave French names to nearly all the streams and mountains, Belle Point was a favorite tarrying ground for rest and traffic to those who made the journey up and down the river. The voyageurs were often accompanied by the early Jesuit missionaries who would daringly leave the boats and go unarmed among the savages. Many years ago Mr. Weaver, one of Fort Smith's early citizens, while plowing in a cornfield turned up some blackened stones resembling an old fire place, several rosary beads and three small iron crosses eaten with rust, indicating a camping place of the Missionaries.

In 1817 Belle Point was chosen as the site for the first fort erected here. It was selected by Major Stephen H. Long, Topographical Engineer, and under orders of Brigadier General Thomas A. Smith for whom the fort was named. Major William Bradford with his company of seventy men arrived Christmas day 1817. The first work done was to make the men comfortable, so small huts were built, later the first fort located on land belonging to the Choctaws was built. This fortification consisted of a stockade formed of squared timbers, driven close together into the ground, two block houses and barracks for the accommodation of the men.

Fort Smith was not built to protect the white people from the Indians but to try to prevent the savage wars between the Osage Indians, who ranged the surrounding country and claimed exclusive right to the game in that locality, and hunters from the Eastern tribes, notably the Cherokees.

At the time the first fort was located here, many of the early pioneers, with their families began to make their way up the Arkansas River in keel boats. Most of these settled at or near Belle Point. The first permanent settler of whom we have any reliable record was Captain John Rogers who came about 1822. His double log house with stone chimneys at each end was located on the river bank near the eastern pier of the Garrison Avenue bridge. The first settlements began here and extended gradually down the river. The portion bordering the river was first settled and the central and southern parts of what is now Sebastian County was not occupied to any considerable extent till after 1840.

Since Fort Smith was not able to settle the Indian wars, the Garrison was abandoned and the troops ordered to find a new location in Indian Territory where they would be near the towns of the Osages and better able to watch and control their movements. In April 1824, Colonel Matthew Arbuckle with his command of the Seventh Infantry left Fort Smith, some men going overland and others by boat to a location on the Verdigris River where they established Fort Gibson. They also had with them the doors, windows and all other movable equipment from the little Fort on Belle Point, leaving one building of Fort Smith intact. We can imagine the consternation and fear of the people left behind. Some of them followed the Army to Fort Gibson, but most had faith in the little settlement and preferred to remain here and make the best of the situation.

The opening of new lands in the West offered a challenge to settlers from the east who began to travel in greater numbers to more fertile country after the Revolutionary War. Immigrants from Europe were arriving on every boat with hope in their hearts of finding a new home in America. More and more people were coming into Arkansas Territory. With this increase in population, they believed they were ready for statehood. These people felt they would be able to write a constitution which would be acceptable to the Congress of the United States when the question of admitting Arkansas to Statehood came before the House for the vote. Governor William Fulton was opposed to the idea, but mass meetings were called all over the Territory and the people were asked to vote on the question of having a Constitutional Convention. When the votes were in, it was discovered they were two to one in favor of such a convention. The Legislature assembled in October 1835 and called the convention to meet at Little Rock January 4, 1836. It met in the First Presbyterian and the First Baptist Churches. It is an interesting fact that the first constitution of the State of Arkansas was written in a Protestant Church. In 1836 Arkansas became the twenty-fifth State in the Union.

An article published in the Arkansas Gazette May 23, 1838, stated that Captain John Rogers had passed through Little Rock on his return trip from Washington and told of the Governments buying a tract of land from him and expected to build a permanent fort in Fort Smith. This was the first time it was made public that the Government intended to construct strong works at this point and that Major Charles Thomas had been selected to superintend the building. Since the people of Fort Smith had never given up hope of having the fort re-activated, this announcement gave new hope and encouragement and a realization that a city on the banks of the river could be a reality.

Part of the Garrsion had been moved to Cantonment Belknap and extended to Texas Road (Towson Avenue). With the exception of the quarters of the Commandant and one or two other buildings, the buildings for the troops were constructed of short logs let into grooved uprights and were built on wooden posts two or three feet high. The property is now occupied by the Immaculate Conception Church, a school and convent, at the East end of Garrison Avenue.

There were no church buildings in Fort Smith at this time. Army Chaplains or the commanding officer held services in one of the government buildings where the people assembled on Sunday morning to worship with the men in uniform. These services often followed the Episcopal order of worship, and traveling missionaries of all faiths were welcome. The Lazarest Missionary Fathers under the charge of the pastor of Natchez worked in this area from 1817 to 1844 serving the community and also holding services at the Fort.

The year 1842 was a milestone in the development and growth of Our Town. The citizens started the year with plans to build a church and by the year's end, December 1842, had incorporated the town and entrusted its government to five trustees.

The need for a church building had long been felt. The future of the little frontier town was assured with the return of the fort from Fort Gibson. In January 1842, a citizens committee met to discuss ways and means for building a church on the union plan. We are fortunate in having found the minutes of the second, third, fourth and fifth meetings of this group.

MEETING 2nd

February 23rd, 1842

The citizens met according to adjournment of 15th inst. The proceedings of the preceding meeting being read the following resolutions were adopted viz:

1. Resolved that the several proposals for building with brick or wood be submitted and read.
2. Resolved that Joesph Bennett, Hiram S. Wheeler and William A. Jackson be appointed a building committee to commence the building of the Church as early as practicable.

3. Resolved that the committee be instructed to build with wood.

4. Resolved that the committee make out a bill of the timber for a house 32 by 40 also lumber together with the foundation of stone or brick and the number and size of the windows.

5. Resolved that the building committee publish that they will receive sealed proposals until noon of the 15th day of March ensuing for building a church. The person making the proposal to find all materials and build according to the plan in the hands of the building committee all proposals * * * giving bond for the completion of the work in good workmanlike manner. Such money as is paid in by the subscribers will be paid for the work.

Adjourned till 17th March 1842.

John Carnall, Secry

Joseph Bennett, President

MEETING 3rd

March 17th 1842

The citizens met according to adjournment. * * * the building committee having reported that there was only one proposal made \$2600. It was resolved that the proposal be rejected as too high.

2. Resolved that sealed proposals be received until Friday the 25th inst at 8 p.m. for building a church according to the plan as drawn by I. O. Sawyer now in the hands of the building committee * * * as follows, viz—rough floors, no gallery, good and substantial frame weather boarded with plank planed.

Moved that the meeting adjourn until Friday 25th inst.

John Carnell

John Rogers, President protem

MEETING 4th

March 31st

The citizens met agreeably to special notice on motion of Joseph Bennett. Captain John Rogers was called to the chair and John Carnall chosen secretary.

Resolution 1. That Francis Low be appointed collector of the subscriptions to build a church at Fort Smith.

Resolution 2. That Capt. J. Rogers, C. A. Bernie, Joseph Bennett, Hiram Sands and John Carnall be appointed a committee to select a site for the building of a Church.

John Carnall

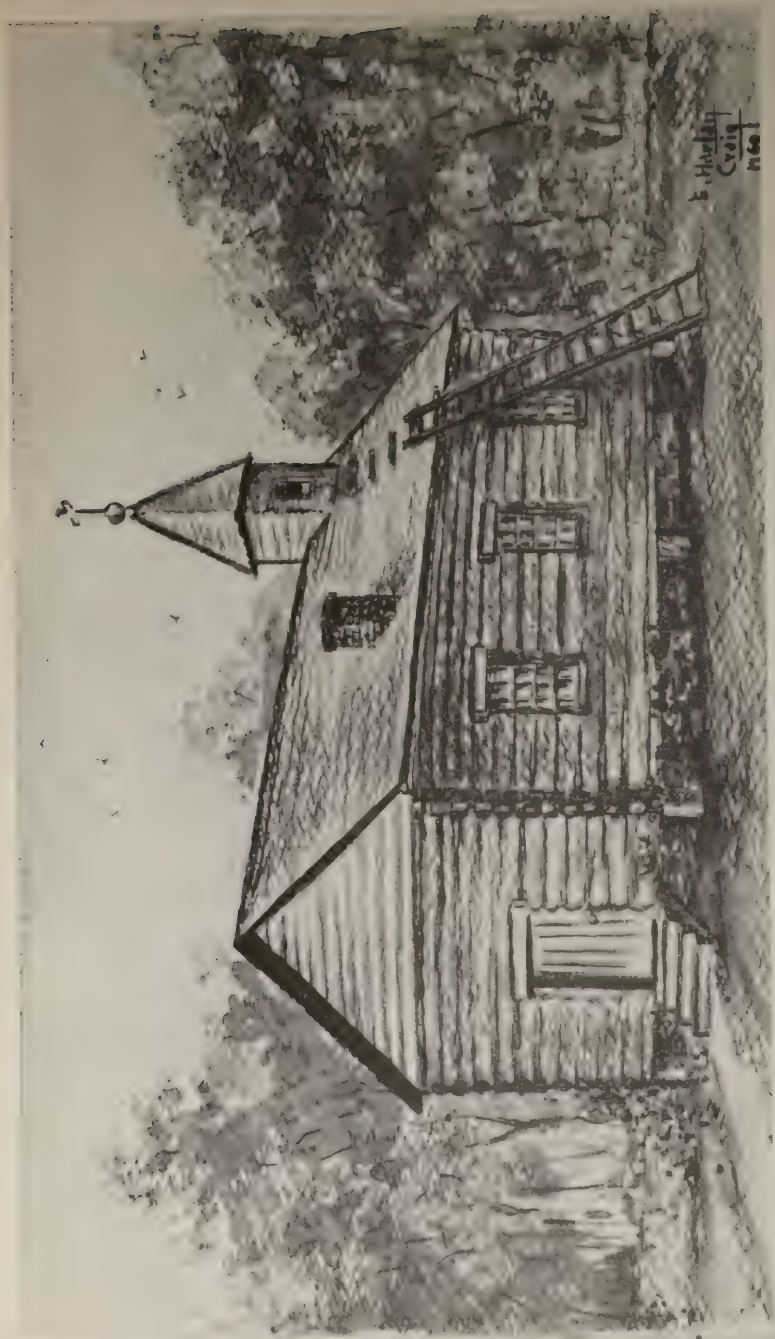
Capt. J. Rogers, Sec.

MEETING 5th

Board met.



Built as a Union Church in 1842, it later became the property of the Presbyterians. Erected on Second and "B" Streets



Saint Patrick's Roman Catholic Church
Built about 1847 on Third and "D" Streets

The first church was built in Fort Smith in 1842 on the corner of Washington and Mulberry, now North Second and "B" Streets. There were no organized church congregations. Public aid was solicited. Like all border towns there were many horse races and sporting men with money. They contributed ten or twenty dollar gold pieces and with contributions added from the more staid and sober people sufficient funds were collected to build the church. The pulpit was occupied on alternate Sundays by alternate ministers until years later when it was controlled by the Presbyterians.

The Church was a little box-like structure with a square tower, painted light and dark gray. It was built on a red clay hill and many rains had washed deep gullies on the sides where the neighborhood children found hiding places in the summer twilight games of hide and seek and run-sheep-run. The grass was sparse about the church, but two or three large catalpa trees gave welcome shade. Inside the walls were of ceiled wood; the windows square paned, the upper sashes painted green. The pulpit chairs were of walnut and upholstered with horsehair. The pews of varnished pine became quite sticky on hot Sundays.

Joseph Bennett, one of the towns first merchants, gave much of his time and means to its construction. The first Sunday School was started there. The worshipers were called in by blasts from a long tin horn by Uncle Maje, an old Negro belonging to Mr. Bennett.

One year before Statehood, the Presbytery of Arkansas, which embraced the whole Territory of Arkansas and the Choctaw country, was constituted in the First Presbyterian Church at Little Rock on April 16, 1835, in obedience to the order of the Synod of Mississippi and South Alabama. It consisted at its organization of Rev. J. W. Moore, Rev. Alfred Wright and Rev. Loving S. Williams and Ruling Elder D. D. Mason. The only minister then residing in the Territory of Arkansas was Mr. Moore. Mr. Wright and Mr. Williams resided in the Choctaw Country. At the first meeting, Rev. Joel L. Wood was received from the Presbytery of Albany, New York. Rev. Cyrus Byington was present and sat as a corresponding member, not having received his certificate of demission from his Presbytery. He became a member of Arkansas Presbytery at a later date. In 1846 the only Presbytery in the State was represented at the General Assembly in Philadelphia for the first time. The commissioner was Rev. J. W. Moore.

In 1846 the Rev. William Kirkpatrick Marshall, who was living in Van Buren, organized the First Presbyterian Church in Fort Smith. He was born in Indiana County, Pennsylvania, July 19, 1808 and was married to Miss Sarah Morrison in 1839. There were five members in the church. They were Joseph Bennett, John F. Wheeler, J. C. Atkinson, Mrs. Margaret Baird and Robert Murray. Joseph Bennett, Mrs. Baird and Robert Murray came in by letter from older churches in the East and William Bennett on profession of faith. Joseph Bennett was chosen as an elder. The church now had a minister and a session of one. That same year two more members

were added and in 1847 there were two deacons and two elders. Rev. Marshall divided his time between Fort Smith and Van Buren, maintained his home in Van Buren and started a school there.

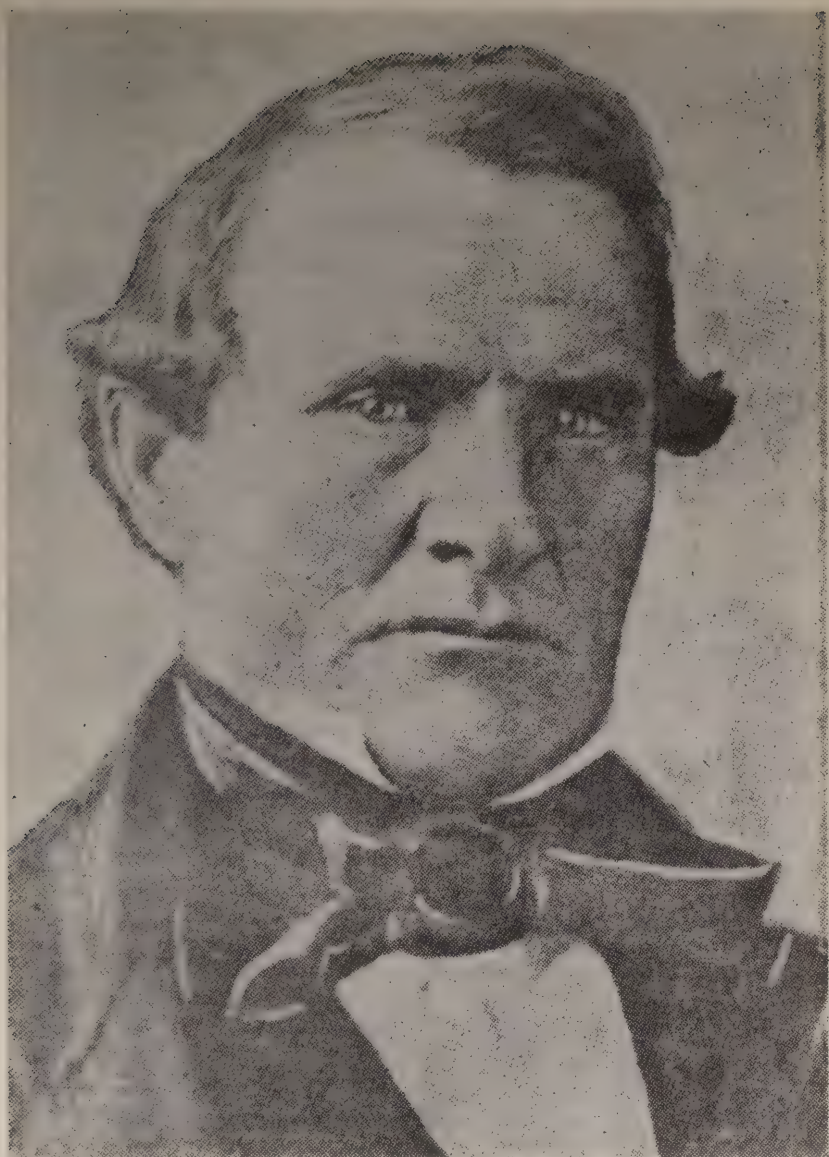
The first Roman Catholic church in Fort Smith was built about 1847, though Mass had been offered in the home of Michael Manning from time to time when a visiting priest was here. The Church was a log structure, measuring twenty by forty-eight feet and was named St. Patrick. It was erected on Third and Hickory (Hickory is now known as "D" Street.). The cost of this church was recorded by Father John Monahan, first priest in charge as follows: Logs, roof and boards \$175; flooring, windows, frames, sashings, doors \$50; nails, clips and hardware, all benches, steps \$28.50; stone pillars \$5; making a total of \$258.50.

When General Zachary Taylor, later twelfth president of the United States, was ordered to move to the Rio Grande in the Mexican War of 1846-48, the United States Government, having no further use for the military post, ordered the land sold to the settlers. January 4, 1848, the Right Reverend Andrew Byrne, first Bishop of Arkansas, bought the 16th section bordering Fort Smith for \$5,250.00 in gold. The tract of 640 acres included all the city now lying east of Towson Avenue and Catholic Avenue (Grand Avenue). Cantonment Belknap had been built on part of this property. It was in 1853 that the Right Reverend Andrew Byrne brought the first nuns to Fort Smith to establish a convent and academy, giving them ten acres of land of that particular portion which had been the residential ground of the General. Five young Irish nuns arrived January 1853. In the two story frame residence of Zachary Taylor the five Sisters of Mercy established St. Anns Convent. For more than a hundred years a chapel or church has graced the east end of Garrison Avenue.

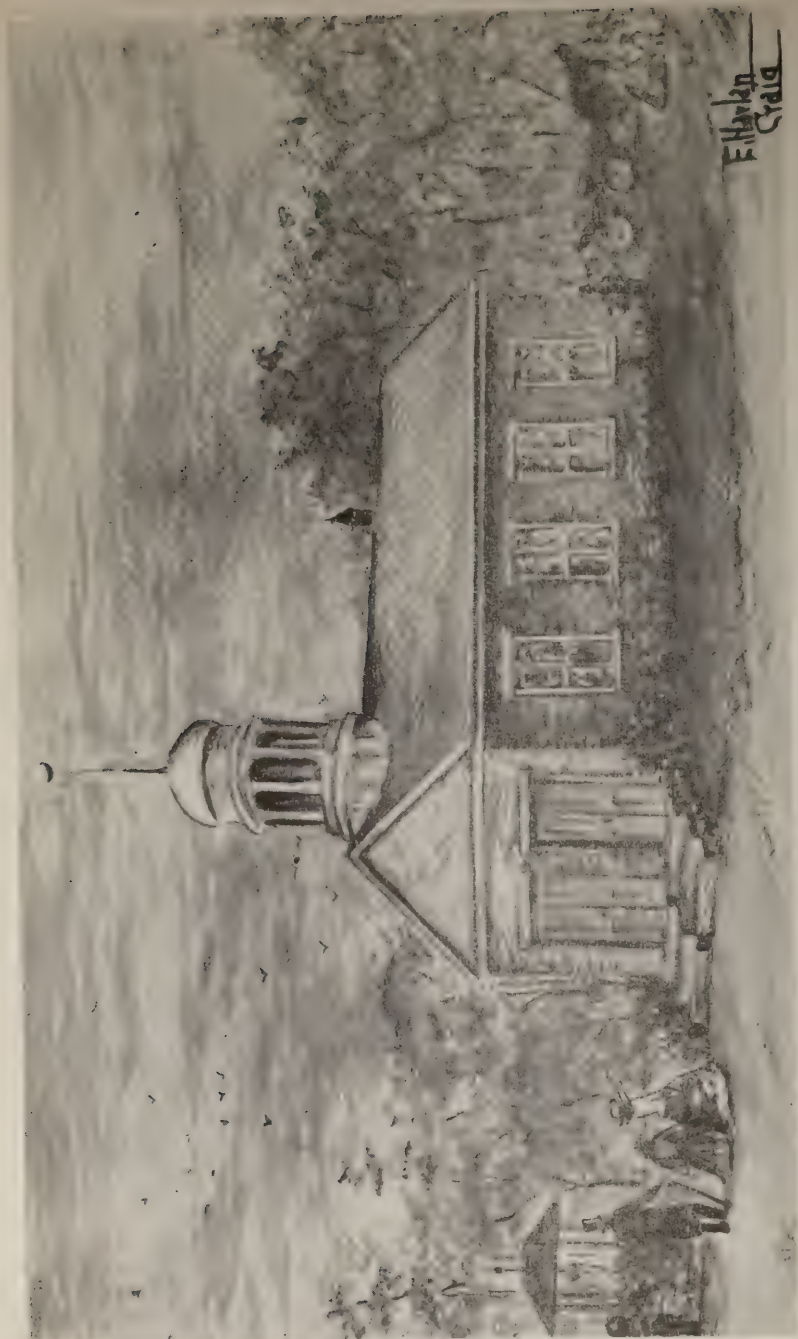
The first record of the Episcopal Church in Fort Smith was the visit of the Right Reverend Leonidas Polk, Bishop of the Southwestern States, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana, about 1838. How many times he may have reached Fort Smith in his visitations is not certain. On one occasion Bishop Polk baptized two children in the home of Major Elias Rector. From 1844 to 1850 the Right Reverend George Washington Freeman was a Missionary Bishop to Arkansas and the Indian Territory. In May 1845 he preached here and later that year appointed the Reverend C. C. Townsend to be missionary in charge of Fort Smith, Indian Territory and Texas.

From a letter written January 1848 by William Falconer (in possession of Mrs. Helen Cooke Johnson) I quote, "We have a spacious room elegantly fitted up in the Garrison with seats and a pulpit by the officers of the U. S. Army at this place for the Episcopal Church."

Following the death of Bishop Freeman, Bishop Henry Champ-
lin Lay was consecrated Missionary Bishop of the Southwest in 1859 and maintained his residence in Fort Smith. Through him,



Rev. Cephas Washburn was an expert on the Cherokee Indians of Arkansas. Minister of Presbyterian Church from 1850 to 1856



E. Harrell
C. G. G. G.

Harrell Chapel (Methodist) Built 1853 at Fifth and "A" Streets

Rev. John Sandels was induced to come to Arkansas and Fort Smith in 1860. At this time a lot had been given by George S. Birnie on which to erect a church. The Mission was organized into a Parish and Rev. John Sandels became its first Rector. The first church built in 1859-60 was a frame building. The lot given by Mr. Birnie was at the corner of Knox (Sixth) and Sycamore (C), the Church facing "C" Street.

The earliest records of the church have been lost, but on January 20, 1860 the wardens and vestrymen of St. John's Parish were: George S. Birnie, Mitchell Sparks, Joseph J. Walton, John Pearson, R. M. Johnson, Peter Y. Brooke, Samuel Griffith, W. H. Mayers, Dr. Nicholas Spring and George Wolf.

The Union Church, shared by the Presbyterians and Methodists, both organized in 1846, and St. Patricks Catholic Church were joined by a third church built in 1848. It was built on the original plat of the town made by John Rogers, and a record of this deed is in the local court house, listed in Book P, page 437-439. The original old and tattered deed, written by hand, states that the lot, described as number 10, in block 13, measuring 50 feet front on Green Street (Fourth and D) by 140 to the alley was sold on January 14, 1848 to the Baptist Church, with Joseph Smedley, William A. Jackson and Dr. J. H. T. Main as trustees, for the sum of \$50.00. A Baptist Church was to be built on this property and duly authorized ministers of the Baptist denomination throughout the United States were to be permitted to preach and "Expound the Word of God therein."

If any of the trustees were removed by death or otherwise, the minister was to call a meeting as soon as convenient and nominate a person over twenty years of age as successor. The trustees were responsible for debts made on the church, but if they were not reimbursed for the money expended within a year, they were authorized to raise this sum by a mortgage on the church. The deed was signed by John Rogers and his wife Mary Rogers. The witnesses were John Stryker and Sam Edmondson. The deed was filed for record January 24, 1848 in record book 2, pages 496 and 498 in Van Buren, Crawford County, Arkansas. A. M. McLean was clerk and ex-officio recorder.

Peter Harrison, a slave of Captain DuVal, and William Wiley built the church of hewn logs. The white congregation assigned times for its use by their slaves and a few free Negroes worshipped with them according to the custom of those times, and one which all the churches followed. Circuit riders held services.

The First Baptist Church of the city was organized December 1, 1857 at the residence of William H. Byers, by these constituent members: William H. Byers, Mrs. C. A. Byers, Mrs. M. C. McKinney, Mrs. M. A. Singleton, Silas Ellis, and Mrs. M. H. Wheeler. Elder D. Buckley, who came to Fort Smith from Little Rock in 1847, was the Moderator and William H. Byers was clerk. In 1860 Rev. R. L. Compere was called as pastor of the church, holding serv-

ices for both white and colored. (We have been unable to find a picture of an early Baptist church in Fort Smith).

The first official record of Methodism is the listing of the Fort Smith circuit in the Arkansas Conference appointments in 1840. A congregation was organized in 1846. Up to 1850, in the history of Methodism, Fort Smith was affiliated with Van Buren. In 1850 the two circuits were divided and on December 14th, a building committee was appointed: John Harrell, William M. Hunt, William A. Jackson, Reuben Lewis and S. S. Sanger, Sr. John Harrell who had fathered the church organization, preached many times to the congregation, probably was the first to urge the building project. The laying of the cornerstone April 15, 1853, was an outstanding event of the day, attended by most of the towns population, including the Odd Fellows and Masons in full regalia. The building was completed and occupied the same year and was called Harrell Chapel after John Harrell. The lot selected was on the corner of Howard (5th Street) and Walnut ("A").

The First Christian Church was organized in 1854 with the following members: Mr. and Mrs. S. M. Rutherford, Miss Margaret Jane Rutherford, Miss Mary Louise Rutherford, Mr. Robert Beall Rutherford, Mr. and Mrs. Ben T. Duval, Mr. and Mrs. John McDonald, Mr. Stephen McDonald, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor, Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Rutherford.

The name "The Christian Chapel" was painted on their first building erected in 1859 on North Sixth Street between "C" and "D."

In reviewing these early histories of the congregations in Our Town and comparing them with the organizations of the same denominations in other sections of the State, one cannot help but be impressed with the complete absence of prejudice and its tragic consequences as they struggled to establish themselves. A contributing factor was the cosmopolitan nature of the people themselves, plus the unique situation of the town on the last frontier bordering Indian Territory. Whatever the cause, we must save our reminiscing for a later time and place and continue our story.

In 1850 Rev. W. K. Marshall ended his period of service with the Presbyterian churches in Fort Smith and Van Buren and went to Texas where he died in 1897. He is buried in Marshall.

In 1850 a noted missionary was called to the pastoral charge of the feeble little church in Fort Smith where for several years he devoted the energies of his soul to the word of his Devine Master. While here he became connected with the Arkansas Presbytery, having hitherto been connected with a Congregational association. He was the Reverend Cephas Washburn whose name is associated with the earliest history of Protestant religion in Arkansas and the Indian Territory. Born in Andover, Massachusetts, he was a Bible scholar as a very young man and after one year of Theology, he was ordained in 1817 by the Congregational Church and was sent

as a missionary to the Cherokee Indians. After enduring the many hardships of the long and perilous journey, Cephas Washburn reached Little Rock, called "The Rock," in 1817 and in 1820 preached what was probably one of the first Protestant sermons in Arkansas. He established historic Dwight Mission in Polk County and served the Cherokee Indians for twenty years. This Mission was later moved to Sallisaw Creek in Sequoyah County, Indian Territory. He served as pastor in Fort Smith until 1856, then became a supply pastor in central Arkansas until his death in 1860. He is buried near Dardanelle. Washburn Presbytery was formed in 1854 and was named in honor of this great man.

The same year the Rev. Cephas Washburn arrived, 1850, a young man from the east settled here and took a position as a clerk in the store of Bennett and Walton. His letters to his parents at Mendon, Massachusetts give a good picture of midcentury frontier life. He soon met most of the people of Fort Smith, joined the Masons and Odd Fellows and participated in the social activities of the town. He had an engineering background of sorts. In the summer of 1850 he was commissioned to draw a plat of the town of Fort Smith, using an old compass borrowed from the Army Garrison. In his letter of March 2, 1851 he told his mother he had been elected county surveyor.

Soon after that Joseph Bennett raised his salary to \$900.00 a year and board, and promised that by the following spring he would have a partnership in the business, but by August 6, 1851, he had accepted a better offer and had gone to the Choctaw Nation to work for F. H. Heald. This young man's name was Francis E. Williams.

The first letter of the series gives the best description of Fort Smith:

"To Mrs. and Mr. Benj. D. Williams:—I like it here first rate and have got a good place. It is the largest wholesale Forwarding and Commission House in the city and I must inform you that this is an incorporated city and has a City Government—Mayor, etc. There is some 50 stores in the place—about 1000 or 1200 inhabitants. We have a few very good houses but the larger portion of them are made of logs.

"The site of the Fort is very handsome. It is about 100 yards from the river on a rising piece of ground. It contains three very large brick houses—each for six families all occupied by officers and their families—a guard house, quartermaster department and commissary's, store house, besides magazines, cannon house, etc., the whole enclosed by a beautiful wall about fifteen feet high. It is about fifty yards from our store exactly opposite.

"The boundary between the United States and the Indian Nation, Mexico, etc., runs about 25 yards from our store door. Just across the river is a famous dueling ground, which is occupied quite often there being hardly a week without someone is stabbed or shot.

"I have a fine boarding place with Mr. Walton. He married Mr. Bennett's daughter. We have five in the store. I write most of the time. Have plenty of sport here—hunting, fishing, parties, etc.

"Tell Father I wish I could send him some of the whips they drive with here. The handles are about ten feet long, and as large as his arm with lashes 15 and 20 foot long and about 2 around.

"Do not have any carriage riding there not being any passable roads except in the City and both men, women and children go horseback. Sometimes three or four come to church on one horse. There is lots of teaming done here. We pay 3 dollars per hundred for hauling 150 miles. Have to team with oxen and mules, there not being even stopping places on the road, so that the cattle have to live on grass altogether in the summer.

Yours
Francis E. Williams"

In his letter dated June 19, 1850, Williams said, "Business has been pretty good but is dull now, as the Californians have all started (for the gold rush). Some two or three thousand emigrants have been through this place this spring. It is said between 60 and 70 thousand have gone by Fort Independence just above us.

"It is pretty busy times in the Garrison now, having just received orders for the mounting of 3 Regiments of Infantry to protect this frontier from the Comanches, Witchitaws and Kiowa Indians, as they have of late been very troublesome stealing horses and killing the farmers who live away from the settlements.

"There has been a band of Regulators committing depredations about 20 miles south of us. If any of the band has anything against a person they just go to his house and shoot him, then run. Two Cherokees hung a short distance from here last week for stealing."

On December 1, 1850, he described the homes of Fort Smith: "You had ought to see some of the houses we have out here made of logs and lined with cotton cloth, floors carpeted, pianos, stuffed chairs and sofas which makes quite a contrast with the houses. They are all famous for fine furniture and fine clothes. They all dress better than they do in the East and the clothing cost twice as much."

He commented on the social life of Fort Smith in his letter of March 2, 1851: "Matrimony is prevailing to an alarming extent, has been some dozen or fifteen weddings the past week. Lots of parties in honor of the occasion, several in the Garrison which were splendid. * * * "We Odd Fellows had a splendid Ball last week and Procession. I did not get home in season to attend. You no doubt saw the notice in the paper. We have lots of Odd Fellows out here, also lots of Free Masons. I have been made a Mason since I have been here, and I find it to be of great benefit to me."

The Rev. Cephas Washburn left Fort Smith and from 1857 to 1858 the Rev. J. C. Stewart acted as a stated supply pastor for the

little Presbyterian Church. The town was growing, and there were high hopes for the future. In September 17, 1858, there arrived in Fort Smith the first westbound Butterfield Overland Mail Coach, the first passengers being Judge and Mrs. John F. Wheeler and their two children of Fort Smith, F. R. Corbin of Washington, D. C., and Waterman Ormsby of the New York Herald. They rode by train from St. Louis to Tipton, Missouri. Here they transferred to one of the sparkling new stage coaches with John Butterfield himself carrying the mail bag.

The Overland Mail operated on a timetable schedule from St. Louis to San Francisco and took twenty-four days to make the trip one way. The arrival of the first stage September 19, 1858, set off a celebration that kept the city awake all night. Fort Smith's biggest celebration was yet to come. Preparations were made for a gala greeting to the first east-bound mail on October 7, but were postponed to October 13 when the committee in charge could not complete all the arrangements in time.

Because of the importance of Fort Smith as a division and distribution point, and the junction point of the St. Louis and Memphis routes, the Overland Company maintained a large agency here. The stables regularly contained from 50 to 100 horses and mules. There were always extra coaches, since these were shipped from the east by steamboat. Fort Smith had some 2,500 inhabitants in 1858 and its fort was garrisoned by United States troops.

The citizens of the little town could not foresee that this celebration and Butterfield Ball would be the last gay and light hearted event many would ever enjoy.

The Presbyterian Church called the Rev. W. A. Sample of Mecklenberg County, North Carolina to be their pastor and he arrived to accept the charge in 1859.



Second Fort in Fort Smith
Construction Started 1838



Fort Smith, Arkansas 1853

SECTION II

CIVIL WAR PERIOD

The year 1860 marked the end of an era and all the familiar way of life. It was the last year many families would enjoy the peace and happiness of being together. Before another year passed, the State of Arkansas had seceded from the Union and people were divided in hearts and minds as they had never been before or since. There was nothing to indicate early in the year 1860 that it would be different from any other. Yet years later when people tried to recall exactly what had happened, they remembered certain events that seemed to set it apart. Crops were planted in season. In late spring, as soon as the weather became warm and the water in the river had the chill off, Rev. E. L. Compere baptized twenty-four colored members of the Baptist Church. Yes, they remembered that May day before the War.

It was apparently the custom of those times to make public the financial status of a church, so no one was surprised when a notice appeared in the local news paper as follows: "We, the undersigned, agree to pay to the Rev. William A. Sample the sums annexed to our names for his services as pastor of the Old School Presbyterian Church in Fort Smith for the year 1860: J. C. Atkinson, \$50; John F. Wheeler, \$30; M. Grimes, \$50; J. H. Sparks, \$15; Abbie B. Sparks, \$10; Mrs. L. A. Butler, \$10; John Gardner, Sr., \$30; D. W. Heard, \$10; E. R. DuVal, \$15; Ben T. DuVal, \$10; John Rogers, \$30; N. Spring, \$25; William B. Sutton, \$10; E. B. Bright, \$25; J. R. Kannady, \$10; J. N. Slosson, \$5; Thomas Quesenbury, \$25; Walton Bourne, \$25; G. C. Smith, \$25; John Carnall, \$10; Wm. W. Haney, \$10; Bostick, Griffith, Pennywitt and Company, \$25; J. K. McKenzie, \$10; John Beckel, \$5; Thomas Vernon, \$5; Mr. Sell, \$20. (At the bottom of the list is the following memorandum: "June 6, paid Mr. Sample \$45.00, J. F. W.). If the total amount seemed small, gifts of food and other supplies made up the difference.

The presidential campaign was in full swing, but most of the news was days and weeks old by the time it reached Fort Smith. A young Englishman, William Tallack, had heard the campaign discussed all the way from San Francisco on the Butterfield stage. He could remember a date, July 4, 1860, because his fellow passengers welcomed its advent at midnight with loud hurrahs. He arrived at our little outpost of civilization to find everyone celebrating the glorious fourth in the old time manner, plus a fair for good measure. A bath at the City Hotel, a good meal with ice water and ice cream "both universal requirements of loyal American citizens in summer," made him forget that he had had to walk the last part of the stage west of Fort Smith when the horses "gave in." The friendly reception he received, a conscientious stage agent, who refused to overload the north bound stage, remained pleasant memories. Long after he returned to England and the South had seceded, he recalled the people who expressed their deep discontent with the executive gov-

ernment and the hopeless corruption found in Washington. He had heard it all across America. It ran like a deep undercurrent beneath the surface in the life of each person he met.

September 20, 1860, a disastrous fire destroyed the Garrison block, the pride and glory of the town. This block was between Ozark and Washington, or as we know it today, First and Second. It extended down Second to "A" Street. Across the street, facing the river, stood the City Hotel built by John Rogers. This block of buildings had been built a few years before at a cost of \$74,000.00, and was exclusively devoted to business. Very little was saved. The fire spread to the City Hotel, but before it, too, was destroyed, most of the furniture was removed. Inadequate insurance was carried on the buildings and the financial loss was a serious blow to the economy of the town. The heart of the business district was gone—not to be rebuilt until after the Civil War.

Captain John Rogers, who had suffered a paralytic stroke a few weeks before, had to be carried on his bed from the burning hotel, to the home of his nephew, Captain Kannady. He remained there until his death Sunday, October 6, 1860. The funeral of Captain Rogers took place on Tuesday morning the 9th of October at ten o'clock. It was the largest and most imposing public procession ever witnessed in the city. The business of the place was entirely suspended, every business house being closed. Numbers of the citizens of Van Buren and of the surrounding country came to pay the last tribute of respect to the departed. The religious services were performed by The Rev. W. A. Sample at the house. His grave at Oak Cemetery is marked by a granite stone:

In Memory of Capt. John Rogers
Founder of Fort Smith
Born Beaver, Penn.,
July 5, 1780 - October 7, 1860

A small stone next to it reads:

Mary, wife of Capt. John Rogers
died Sept. 14, 1854
Aged 56 years

Mary Rogers joined the Presbyterian Church in 1848 when the Rev. W. K. Marshall was pastor. Cephas Washburn (pastor from 1850 until 1856) officiated at Mary's funeral in 1854.

The rest of the year 1860 passed with but little more excitement than that occasioned by the presidential election. Before the close of the year, when it was known that Abraham Lincoln had been elected President, men were beginning to question themselves and one another, "What of the Future?"

On Monday, April 15, 1861, after the siege and fall of Fort Sumpter, President Lincoln issued his proclamation calling for 75,000 volunteers "to suppress combinations too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings and to cause the laws to be fully executed." Immediately the War Department notified the Governors the number each State would be required to furnish. The requisition made upon Arkansas was for 780 men.

To this Governor Rector replied as follows:

"Little Rock, Ark., April 23, 1861

Hon. Simon Cameron
Secretary of War
Washington City, D. C.

"In answer to your requisition for troops from Arkansas to subjugate the Southern States I have to say that none will be furnished. The demand is only adding insult to injury.

"The people of this commonwealth are free men—not slaves—and will defend to the last extremity their honor, lives and property, against Northern mendacity and usurpation.

Henry M. Rector
Governor of Arkansas."

Just two weeks after Governor Rector sent this communication to the Secretary of War, the Arkansas State Convention passed the secession ordinance and the preparation for war was commenced.

The echoes of war came nearer and nearer. The Northern troops found themselves sandwiched in between a handful of Northern sympathizers and a large majority of Southern advocates. All groups realized that war was at hand when the State Troops seized the United States Post at Fort Smith.

The following report was sent by Major R. C. Gatlin, Fifth Infantry, to Colonel L. Thomas, Adjutant General of the United States Army at Washington, D. C.

"Fort Smith, Ark., April 24, 1861

Colonel:

I have the honor to report that a body of troops of the State of Arkansas, under the command of Colonel S. Borland, entered and took possession of the Post of Fort Smith last night, Captain Sturgis of the First Cavalry having evacuated it but a few hours previous. Being on a visit at the Post at the time, I was made a prisoner of war by authority of his excellency, the Governor of the State, but

permitted to go at large upon giving my promise not to fight against the State of Arkansas or the Southern Confederacy during the pending difficulties between the latter and the United States unless exchanged."

Very respectfully your obedient servant

R. C. Gatlin
Major, 5th Infantry"

On the same day the state troops took the post, a group of prominent citizens of Sebastian County met at Greenwood to consider what action should be taken in connection with the war. A committee to draft resolutions expressive of the meeting was appointed. Their report was as follows:

"Whereas the administration of Lincoln with a spirit of duplicity equaled only by its total disregard of every patriotic duty, has inaugurated a policy of coercion and subjugation by force of arms arraying brother against brother, therefore be it

"Resolved, by the citizens of Sebastian County, of all parties in mass assembled, that we will resist such policy on the part of the Administration even to the death! And to this we pledge our fortunes and our honor." (Goodspeed p. 740)

Although these delegates had been opposed to secession, their attitude changed with the revision of public opinion which ensued after Lincoln issued the call for seventy-five thousand soldiers to enforce the laws of the United States in the South. Lincoln also sent out an order for the dispatch of a thousand regulars of the United States Army to Fort Smith. The President's actions prompted David Walker, President of the Convention, to assemble the second session on May 6, 1861. When the vote was taken, for or against secession, the vote was almost unanimous for loyalty to the Southland. (Herndon, Dallas F. "Highlights of Arkansas History.)

Fort Smith became the center of Confederate activity for this section. Voluntary troops were soon organized and the first company to be raised in Fort Smith was known as the "Fort Smith Rifles," commanded by J. H. Sparks with W. J. Walton as first lieutenant.

In 1861, at the age of seventeen, John Lucey joined the Confederate Army with the "Fort Smtih Rifles." When the Federals left the fort, Captain Sturgis cut down the flag pole that stood between the officers quarters and the soldiers barracks. A detail was sent from the "Fort Smith Rifles" to erect a new flag pole and John Lucey and Paul R. Krone were chosen for this work. It was quite a job for inexperienced men to put up a pole of such height, but it was done and these men raised the first Confederate Flag in Fort Smith.

Other companies were soon fully organized, and joined the State troops before the close of July 1861. The citizens of Fort Smith and vicinity subscribed \$1,000.00 per month for the soldiers families.

It is a remarkable fact that the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America held together through all the controversies about slavery and secession until May 1861. The Methodist and Baptist churches had split into North and South over slavery and other controversial subjects in 1845. Although all the causes which had divided the United States into North and South were tending to divide the Church, it is possible that the Presbyterian Church might have continued to hold together if it had not been for the fatal act of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly of the undivided church met in Philadelphia on May 16, 1861. Eight states had already seceded and these states had been organized into the Confederate States of America. The War Between the States had begun. Of course the atmosphere was tense when the Assembly met in Philadelphia. Very few commissioners from the South were present. On account of the war it was impossible for them to get to Philadelphia. On the sixth day of the General Assembly, after prolonged discussions, the Assembly passed the historic Gardiner Spring Resolutions by a vote of 156 to 66. That was what split the Church.

The objectionable resolution read: "That this General Assembly in the spirit of Christian patriotism which the Scriptures enjoin and which has always characterized this Church do hereby acknowledge and declare our obligation to promote and perpetuate, so far as in us lies, the integrity of these United States and to strengthen, uphold, and encourage the Federal Government in the exercise of all its functions under our noble constitution and to this constitution in all its provisions, requirements and principles, we profess our unabated loyalty."

It is obvious that the 100,000 Presbyterians in the South could not have given their loyalty and support to the Federal Government, if they had desired to do so. They were at that time citizens of states that had seceded and formed the Confederate States of America. It would have been considered high treason if they had given their loyalty and support to the Federal Government. The Presbyterians in the South took the position that the General Assembly had no right to make a political deliverance telling them where their allegiance belonged. This view was shared by many thoughtful Presbyterians in the North. Here we see one of the reasons why Southern Presbyterians to this day fight shy of anything that looks like a political deliverance by the Church.

During the summer of 1861 one Southern presbytery after another withdrew from the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America until all forty-seven had withdrawn. In August, 1861, a convention representing quite a number of Presby

teries met in Atlanta to make plans for the organization of a Southern Presbyterian General Assembly.

In line with the plans made in Atlanta, commissioners from 47 Presbyteries met in the First Presbyterian Church of Augusta, Georgia, on December 4, 1861, and organized the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America. Dr. B. M. Palmer, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of New Orleans, a native of Charleston, South Carolina, preached the opening sermon. His text was Ephesians 1:22, 23, and his subject was "The Headship of Christ Over the Church."

The Presbyterian Church in Fort Smith was quite small. With the war and the sudden and complete separation between the Northern and Southern branches, no time was given for the South to organize to withstand such a division. The Rev. W. A. Sample remained until 1863, but because of his sincere sympathy for the Northern cause, he felt it expedient to leave. All the churches were affected. For the duration of the war, the Episcopal Church was closed a portion of the time and was without a rector, the Rev. John Sandels serving as Chaplain in the Confederate Army. The program of the Christian Church was disrupted and retarded. Rev. E. L. Compere of the Baptist Church went to Texas. The Methodist Church declined. The Catholic Church was without a pastor for almost a year before Father Lawrence Smyth was appointed to Fort Smith. He made the following memorandum in his scrapbook: "I reached Fort Smith in December 1862, I found no church, no bed, no chair but a three legged barroom chair, a very poor and very slim congregation. I kept the sisters here, even when ordered to the Rock (Little Rock) by Father Pat and they saved their convent." St. Patrick, the little log church, had been abandoned because of its unsafe condition. Another log house, with wings added to it, situated on Lexington Avenue and "D" Street, was used as a church until 1867.

It is difficult for the reader of the present day to appreciate the spirit which prevailed among Southern people at the beginning of the war, the speeches of the public men, the columns in the newspapers, and the enthusiasm of the public. The fact that the war dragged on for five years against superior odds shows the determination of the people.

Not only were the men active in these terrible times, but the women were busy too, in their particular sphere. They organized circles or sewing societies to aid the cause, knitting stockings, making uniforms, shirts and other clothing for the volunteers. They prepared food for the sick. Most of the meetings of the sewing society are said to have been held in the old Methodist Church on North 5th and A Streets, although the Presbyterian Church was also used for the same purpose. Irrespective of creed, all faiths gathered and worked.

A home guard was organized. The presence of so many strangers caused more or less disorder. There was also fear of trouble from the "Pin Indians," (they identified themselves by wearing crossed pins) who lived not far away in the Cherokee Nation. The captain of this guard was C. B. Johnson. The majority of the members were too old for active service, though most of them got into the regular army at a later date.

July 6, 1861, "The Times and Herald" contained the following item:

"Captain Sparks of the "Fort Smith Rifles," and junior editor of this paper, left yesterday with his company." Thus, with a brief mention of four lines was noticed the departure for the scene of war of the young men from the little town. The "Belle Point Guards" left the day before. Mr. E. B. Bright and W. W. Perry furnished free teams and wagons to transport the baggage of both companies. Each soldier carried a Minie rifle and marched by foot north over the Boston Mountains. The first thing the men did when they arrived at Camp Walker was to write the following card of thanks which appeared in the "Times and Herald" of July 16:

"Camp Walker, July 12, 1861

"After taking our seat (on the ground) this evening, we cannot help but think to whom it is we owe the respectable appearance we made upon our entry into Camp Walker. The ladies of Fort Smith are brought forcibly to our minds and we say most emphatically—God bless them! To them we owe it all and may the Lord of Heaven grant not only that we may return victorious, but that no mother, wife or sister of our noble-hearted Fort Smith will ever have cause to shed a tear for the loss of a son, husband or brother. A more noble, generous, patriotic and industrious set of women ever existed on earth; and if you men will but halfway imitate their devotedness to the cause of their Country, the Northern fanatics will soon have cause to repent them of the error of their ways.

"We cannot refrain here from returning thanks to Messrs. Perry and Bright, for the wagons and teams they sent us to carry our knapsacks. Our men have been calling down blessings upon their heads ever since. May "Marble Hall" flourish forever."

Yours
"Fort Smith Rifles"

(Marble Hall was the General Merchandise Store of Perry and Bright located at the corner of an alley between Third and Fourth Streets.)

The war for these young men started at Oak Hill or Wilson's Creek on August 10, 1861. The five companies of Fort Smith took part in the battle with "Reids Battery" as the most active of these. The Southerners won, but they suffered greatly. Especially severe were the losses in the Fort Smith companies.

There were no organized hospitals and as the wounded men began to return to Fort Smith they were placed in a few buildings available at the time. The Presbyterian and Methodist Churches, and for a while the Commissary building, were converted for this use. Ladies from all churches and the nuns from the convent did what they could to relieve the suffering and care for the men.

During the fall of 1861, and the succeeding winter, hundreds of people passed through the town on their way from Missouri to Texas. Many of these refugees were people of wealth with slaves and an abundance of household goods. Others were not so well equipped but had enough means to enable them to reach the Lone Star State. All were fleeing to Texas to escape the advancing Federal armies and the terrible internecine warfare that was raging in their own state. A portion of the younger element of the refugees joined the Army here.

In January of 1853, a small group of German Lutheran families living about twelve miles south of Fort Smith began building a log cabin structure to serve them as a place of worship and as a school for their children. These settlers living in what is now called Long Prairie had immigrated to this country from Saxony in 1843 and from the time of their arrival had read Lutheran sermons on Sundays in the homes of the various families. Fortunately a German teacher, Carl Reichert, had immigrated to this country with the other Saxony families. The job of schoolmaster fell into his hands. Among the families composing the small congregation at Long Prairie included these names: Ellig, Reichert, Selig, Grober, Schoeppe, Griener, Boas, Rosenbaham, Dedo, Faerber, Schoot, Harder and Soederberg. When the armies of the North and South began hostilities in 1861, this small group of German Lutherans at Long Prairie reaped the ravages of war. Their farms were plundered by bushwhackers who struck relentlessly with a guerilla type warfare. These Lutheran families, with little else except a few personal possessions and a few wagons, fled to Fort Smith and the safety of the Army Garrison. They never returned to their farm homes, but settled instead in Fort Smith with most of the families living in the area which is now Second, Third and Fourth Streets.

The troops that invaded Missouri and fought the Battle of Oak Hill on August 10, 1861, were but half armed. Everyone had to bring his own clothes, uniforms there were none, wagons were lacking, shoes were scarce, harness was made of rope, but there were plenty of mules and horses till close to the end. The tragic fact remained that there were no arms to fight with beyond the "Squirrel Guns" that these frontiersmen already had. That, and spirit were all the Confederacy in Arkansas ever had. With nothing more than this, they withdrew to Fort Smith, regrouped, reorganized, and in the spring marched North again. On the seventh and eighth of March, 1862, in bitterly cold weather, they fought the Battle of Pea Ridge in Northwest Arkansas which they lost. Two Confederate generals were lost in this battle, General James McIntosh and General Benja-

min McCulloch. Both were buried in the National Cemetery at Fort Smith with military honors. Religious services at the grave were conducted by Rev. John Sandels of the Episcopal Church. General McCulloch's body was afterwards disinterred and removed to Texas.

Thomas Carmichael Hindman was given the task of whipping together another army. He came to Fort Smith and by September 1862 he had gathered about fifteen thousand men, equipped with a pitifully meagre supply of guns and ammunition for at least a short campaign. The Indians, who had joined the Confederacy, were in that army, as well as men from Missouri, Texas and Louisiana. Though there were few uniforms and almost no suitable shoes, this was the best, as it proved to be nearly the last effective army Arkansas had. The battle was fought December 7, 1862, at Prairie Grove in Northwest Arkansas and with its loss the hopes of the Confederacy in the West were lost forever.

There were no battles fought in the immediate vicinity of Fort Smith, though there were several skirmishes between the Confederates and the Union forces. One of these, known locally as the battle of Massard Prairie, occurred July 27, 1863. The Confederate forces were under command of General R. N. Gano and though outnumbered, they achieved surprise and victory on the field, but withdrew from the engagement.

The Confederate and State forces held possession of Fort Smith from April 1861 until September 1, 1863, at which time the Federalists under General Blunt took charge. Col. W. S. Clous, 1st Kansas Cavalry, was in command until December 1863.

Men from Arkansas moved on to fight in other states, about 58,000 for the Southern cause and 6000 for the Unionists. The "3rd Arkansas" was somewhat different from other Confederate registrants—was all volunteer, for one thing. Most of them were some older than the average graycoat. While others enlisted for a given time, Arkansas recruits enlisted "for the war." These Rebels were a tough lot, not much polish, with contempt for close order drill, and other formalities of the soldier trade. They joined up to fight, and General Lee gave them the opportunity.

These were the men who almost a hundred years later were to win from Dr. Douglas Southall Freeman, dean of Civil War historians, the accolade: "The finest combat unit in the Army of Northern Virginia, perhaps the best in the Confederate service."

These were, "Lee's Miserables," so valiant that "when the victorious Union troops paraded to receive the surrender, to accept the bullet riddled battle flag and stacked rifles, they came to a smart 'present arms' when all that was left of the fierce Third Arkansas Infantry (Volunteers) marched past"—the only troop so honored. Truly there were few pacifists or shirkers among the frontiersmen. Approximately six thousand battles, skirmishes and engagements

were fought during the Civil War, and more than three hundred and fifty of them took place in Arkansas.

The hardships suffered in Fort Smith during the time it was occupied by the United States troops, crop failures when people did not have enough to eat, high prices, separated families, lack of communication, distorted news, all the horror of war, have been told and retold and are a matter of history.



Episcopal Church 1860
Sixth and "C" Streets



Looking East on Garrison Avenue 1870. White Frame Church (Immaculate Conception). First Church built in Fort Smith after Civil War

SECTION III

RECONSTRUCTION

There were many Unionists in the State and with the Federal Army occupying Little Rock, there was a movement to rejoin the Union. This was accomplished in January 1864 with a meeting in Little Rock of a convention whose purpose was to reestablish civil government and to restore normal relations with the central government.

Then, according to Valentine Dell, editor of the "New Era," a bomb shell was exploded in Fort Smith and Van Buren, when J. B. Stockton, special treasury agent in February 1864 issued a circular calling for surrender to the government of all property in the State that had been abandoned by Confederate soldiers when they and their families left Fort Smith and Van Buren. Much of the property had been possessed by Federal soldiers and others and under the Stockton order it had to be returned to the government.

Reconstruction was on, not to disappear till May 1874, ten long and lean and remarkable years, which left their mark forever on the State of Arkansas. The State's political fortunes were in the hands of strangers. However, with the courage and optimism of Americans, Arkansas set about the task with enthusiasm, and with the devious methods known to people began to scheme to regain control of the State Government from the carpetbaggers. Most private business had been suspended during the war years. People returning to their homes from places of refuge in Texas and other points further South found everything in ruins. If the task of rebuilding, and re-establishing themselves seemed hopeless, those people did not recognize the fact.

The Presbyterian and Methodist church buildings had been used as hospitals during the war, and while Harrell Chapel (Methodist) remained in the hands of the military authorities for the duration, the little Union Church reverted to its original plan, and all denominations used it as a place of worship when a minister was available. The Episcopal Church was closed for a time. St. Patricks Catholic Church disappeared. The occupying forces probably carried it away a log at a time. It is related that in 1863 the Union Army started to use the Baptist Church for war purposes by storing hay in it. Later when it was being torn down, an appeal was made to Brig. General C. Bussey, the Federal General, to spare it for the sake of religion. Lumber was hauled back by negro troops and the building repaired.

It was probably through the interest of Jerry Harlin (Holland) born in North Carolina in 1840 and whose mother was brought as a slave to Hermannsburg (Dutch Mills) that this church building was saved. He was mustered in the United States Army at Fayetteville in 1864 and served as a cook, coming to Fort Smith before the war was over. He stayed here and made his home next door to the

church on Fourth Street. The preservation of the history of this little church was due, in part, to the devotion, love and faith of Uncle Jerry as he was known. He died in 1935 at the age of ninety-five and was buried in the National Cemetery. Before his death he gave the history which he had kept to Mrs. Willie D. Jackson, who in turn gave it to the writers of this book.

Records of all churches were scattered, some of them lost forever. One can only know or realize the extent of the destruction when a search is made for this history and nothing is found. We can hope that some day it will be rediscovered tucked away for "safe keeping."

The Presbyterians were without a pastor from 1863 until 1866, when they called the Rev. H. T. Morton whose task it was to reorganize the congregation. The other churches were trying to pick up the burden of their responsibilities and restore order.

In the fall of 1866 the plague of cholera came to Fort Smith. Living so far West away from the great cities, the people had hoped for exemption. It followed the lines of travel. It chased the caravans on the plains enroute to California. It followed the steam boats up the river and they buried the dead at every landing. This was not the first epidemic of cholera, but it was by far the most devastating. At midnight a steamer landed at the wharf in Fort Smith and the dead were carried into town and placed on the floor of the Presbyterian Church. The infection spread rapidly to civilians and soldiers stationed at the Garrison. Each morning at dawn, the citizens heard the farewell salute being fired over the graves of the soldiers who had died during the night and were being given some semblance of military funeral. All the city churches held a day of fasting and prayer for relief from the plague. The Rev. H. T. Morton of the Presbyterian Church and the Rev. John Sandels, Rector of the Episcopal Church officiated. The disease was checked in late fall but not before it had carried off more than one hundred souls.

The first church built after the Civil War in Fort Smith was the little white frame Catholic Church at the east end of Garrison Avenue, dedicated August 18, 1867 by Right Rev. Edward Fitzgerald, D.D. Rev. Lawrence Smyth was its first pastor and it was called Immaculate Conception. Protestants and Catholics alike rejoiced in the occasion and a great congregation gathered to watch and take part in the ceremonies.

The Lutheran families, who had fled to Fort Smith during the war, decided not to return to their farms at Long Prairie. Through hard work and sacrifice they felt they were in a position to reorganize. It was in 1868 that these German families gathered in the Presbyterian Church and held their first congegalional meeting

with Paul Krone reading the sermon in German. They voted to purchase from the Rogers estate, six lots on North Twelfth street for the sum of \$600.00. A small frame church on a site just west of the present church was built in 1869. An invitation to the public appeared March 3, 1869 in the "New Era" inviting every one to be present when the cornerstone would be laid "on Sunday, the 7th inst." All denominations were urged to be present as well as the different secret societies. The procession started at two o'clock p.m. from the Methodist Church.

During the year 1869 a church directory was published in the "New Era." It was read with interest, but for some reason was used for just one year.

Presbyterian—Old School—South.

Corner Washington and Mulberry Streets. Rev. W. A. Sample, Pastor. Services every Sabbath at 10½ A. M. and 7½ P. M. Every Wednesday at 7½ P. M. Sunday School at 9 A. M. and Singing exercise at 4 P. M.

Protestant Episcopal

Corner Van Buren and Sycamore Streets. Rev. John Sandels, Rector. Services every Sabbath at 11 A. M. and 7 P. M. Sunday School at 9 A. M. C. M. Barnes, Superintendent.

Catholic Church

Garrison Avenue. Rev. Patrick Reilly, Pastor. (Father Lawrence Smyth was serving, too.) Services at 7 A. M. and 10 A. M. Vespers at 3 P. M.

Methodist Episcopal South (Harrell Chapel)

On Howard, near the corner of Mulberry Street, Rev. Grana-de, Pastor. Services every Sabbath at 11 A. M. and 7½ P. M. Sunday School at 8½ A. M. Class meeting on the 1st and 3rd Sundays in each month at 4 P. M. Services for colored people on the 3rd and 4th Sundays at 4 P. M. Bible Review at 7 P. M. each Friday.

Methodist Episcopal (North)

Missouri and Arkansas Conference, Fort Smith District, Fort Smith Circuit. A. J. Stewart, P. O. Points for preaching: Fort Smith, Greenwood, Jenny Lind, Hickory Grove and Waldron.



Lutheran Church and School—Built 1869
Located North 12th and "D" Streets



First Christian Church 1886
Now occupied by the Greek Orthodox Church
Located on North 7th and "C" Streets

African Methodist Episcopal

On Mulberry Street, between Green and Wayne Streets. Rev. Granville Ryles, Pastor. Services every Wednesday at 7½ P. M., and first Sabbath in each month.

Missionary Baptist (White)

On Knox Street. Rev. E. L. Compere, Pastor. Services 1st, 2nd and 3rd Sundays in each month at 11 A. M. Sunday School at 9 A. M.

Missionary Baptist (Colored)

On Green Street. Rev. Peter Conway, Pastor. Services every Sunday except 4th Sunday in each month at 3 and 8 P. M. Sunday School at 1 and 3 P. M. each Sabbath at colored school house.

Christian

At Mrs. Walker's school house on Knox Street. Rev. Mr. Northcutt. Services every fourth Sunday in each month.

Lutheran (German)

Building in course of erection ready to be occupied in a few weeks. Rev. Martin Wyneken, Pastor. Services at present in M. E. Church on Howard Street at 3 P. M. each Sunday.

We are sure, from the results of the accomplishments of these various small and poor congregations, that their success was due, in part, because each man gave a cheerful helping hand to his neighbor. The urgency felt by all to rebuild the churches is quite apparent to us today.

The Rev. H. L. Morton was pastor of the Presbyterian Church from 1866 until 1868, when the congregation recalled the Rev. W. A. Sample, as stated supply pastor. However, it was not until April 1, 1871, that a notice appeared in the newspaper that he had been ordained as the regular pastor. A few months later, July 12, 1871, another notice appeared that Bishop Pierce, assisted by the Rev. D. McManus, consecrated St. Johns Episcopal Church.

By this time, a number of members had been added to the Presbyterian Church rolls. The following list of pioneer members has been preserved in the old records:

Mr. Joseph Bennett, Maj. and Mrs. James H. Sparks, Dr. and Mrs. Smelzer, Mr. Stromberg, Mr. and Mrs. John T. Wheeler, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Miller*, Capt. and Mrs. Hubbard Stone, Mrs. Hannah B. Sparks, Mrs. Margaret Baird, Mr. and Mrs. J. N. Hewes*, Mr. and Mrs. Hunt*, Mr. and Mrs. Haglin*, Mr. and Mrs. Lee and family, Mr. and Mrs. Wilson and family, Mr. and Mrs. R. F. Dickens*, Capt. and Mrs. Reynolds, Mr. and Mrs. Eli Mitchell, Mrs. Stratton and Miss Pet Stratton, Miss Sarah Clark*, Mr. and Mrs. Carrington, Mrs. Pape and family*, Mr. and Mrs. Bourne*, Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Atkinson, Mr. and Mrs. Churchill, Mr. and Mrs. Vernon, Mr. and Mrs. McKee and family, Mrs. Beckel and Miss Emma Beckel, Miss Mary Van, Mr. and Mrs. Perry and family, Mr. Henry Reutzel, Mr. and Mrs. B. F. Atkinson, Mr. George Sengel*, Mr. and Mrs. Levi Zinn, Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Clarke* and family, Miss Ozite Atkinson, Mr. and Mrs. Dave McKibben, Miss Sabra Warren.

(The asterisk denotes those members who still have descendants on the Church rolls today.)

There are perhaps others whose names have not been recorded, as the records were not carefully kept and some have been completely lost.

To recall those earlier events in the church, and relive those memories with younger generations, was left in the form of a story entitled "Personal Reminiscences" written in 1941 by Mrs. Lucy Sparks Yantis of Fort Smith, the daughter of Major and Mrs. J. H. Sparks named above in the list of earliest members of the Church. Major Sparks was the third deacon of the Church:

"My childhood home was at the foot of the clay hill on Washington and Mulberry where the little church stood and my childhood memories are closely interwoven with the resonant ringing of the church bell. It was at our deep well on the old terrace of flagstones that the Sunday School children came trooping for water before the church service, and from which the silver pitcher on the pulpit table and the baptismal font were filled. Also it was most convenient to keep the communion service and wine at our home where my Mother baked the sacramental loaves. The Church choir frequently met in our home for practice, as the old square piano made as good music as the little melodeon and it saved heating and lighting the church."

Here may be recounted a story of the first choir, written by a member, Miss Saphronia Mellette*, who became Mrs. Thomas H. Barnes and the Grandmother of Wm. M. Eads, Sr., an elder in the First Church of Fort Smith:

"A beautiful little melodeon furnished the music in our little church in those days and it was played by Mrs. Sample, the beloved wife of our Pastor. The first choir in the winter of 1869-1870 consisted of the following faithful ones: Mrs. Hubbard Stone, Mrs. Hewes (my sister), Miss Mellette (myself), Mr. Hewes and Mr. Bulgin*. Others becoming faithful members later were Mrs. J. H. Sparks, Mrs. J. H. Rogers*, Mr. Sewald, Dr. Smelzer and Miss Lizzie Sparks. Our meetings for rehearsal were looked forward to with great pleasure in spite of having to walk through muddy streets with coal oil lanterns. However we took our responsibility very seriously and kept our Friday nights free."

*(Mr. Bulgin, great grandfather of Lewis Phillips, Jr., a deacon in First Church, and David Phillips, Mrs. Rogers, mother of Mrs. Roy Johnston and grandmother of Douglas Rogers, Jr.)

Returning to "Personal Reminiscences":

"One unforgettable scene on Communion Sundays was the passing of the bread and wine to several white headed old Negroes who sat at the back of the church, and one, "Uncle Maje" was never absent.

"There were faithful Sunday school workers during those early years as there are now: Mr. Henry Reutzel, Mr. George T. Sparks, Mr. J. H. Sparks, Mrs. Sample, Mr. George Sengel (Father of Mrs. Herschel Hunt and Randolph Sengel). Dr. Smelzer was superintendent for many, many years and when he died his desk was draped in black for thirty days. The hymn, "In the Sweet Bye and Bye" was new, and Dr. Smelzer loved it so that it was sung at his funeral and the words printed on black bordered cards which were carried home by his sorrowing friends.

"The children were taught the catechism in those days and as a child of six years I stood before the pastor and recited perfectly the answers in the Shorter Catechism, for which I received a little Testament with a gilt clasp. Six years later in "The New Church" I recited the Westminster Shorter Catechism asking myself the questions and repeating the answers in order perfectly, also the Ten Commandments and Apostles Creed. Thus were young Presbyterians trained in those bygone days. For this feat, I received a beautiful Bible, published in Philadelphia with my name and date filled in by Mr. George Sengel in a fine Spencerian hand, adorned with many a curlicue.

"Besides these serious activities, there were social events and good times for both children and adults. Church socials held in private homes managed by the Ladies Aid and Missionary Societies. Diets had not been invented and the women vied with one another in baking turkeys and hams, making layer cakes, salads, custards, and syllabub, jellies and breads.

"The young people of the Sunday School had moonlight excursions up the Arkansas River on one of the small white steamboats which used to ply its waters—the "Jennie May" and the "Ella Hughes" all decked out with flags and filled with happy crowds.

"Perhaps sentiment lingers longest about the old fashioned Christmas trees in the little church on Christmas Eve. The young folks trimmed them, all decorations home made except the Angel or Star. The roaring fire in the big stove, the lighted wax tapers on the tree, the heat bringing out the unforgettable fragrance of cedar fresh from the woods. There were presents for young and old, none forgotten. There were songs and speeches by the children (who had never heard of a pageant or cantata) and the Christmas story, simply told. Then the final thrill of Santa Claus himself in his trappings of scarlet and white with jingling sleigh bells and his big pack yielding gayly colored tarlatan stockings, filled with nuts and candy; the mingling of the generations, all aglow with the Christmas spirit, long, long ago."

With new people moving to town, and business prospects encouraging, at least they were in the minds of far seeing public officials, hope for a real boom seemed a possibility and the natives had high hopes for the future. Then came another big fire! The danger of wood fires, oil lanterns, candles and frame houses was always present. When the fire bell sounded all the able bodied men rushed to lend assistance and help with the bucket brigade.

Fire destroyed the Federal Garrison officers quarters at the West end of Garrison Avenue in December 1871. Lt. F. W. Thibaut, the commanding officer of the post, was complimented by a committee composed of W. W. Bailey, H. J. McConnell, I. W. Fuller and L. G. Scott for his prompt and efficient action in preventing the spread of the flames. The Alert Hook and Ladder attempted to assist the soldiers, but the muddy lake on Garrison Avenue prevented them from getting their machine to the scene of the fire which was caused by an overheated flue. The citizens always congratulated themselves if the fire was confined to its place of origin—memories of past disasters lingered in all minds.

United States troops were finally withdrawn from Fort Smith September 1871 and the military reservation was relinquished to the Interior Department for disposition under the Act of Congress approved February 14, 1871, by a War Department letter of March 24, 1871. 1st Lt. F. W. Thibaut was the last commander of the Fort. After the Federal Garrison officers quarters had burned, quarters were made available for him and his wife in the Old Commissary building.

When Congress passed a bill on February 11, 1871, to dispose of useless military reservations, one of which was Fort Smith, John Carnall, one of Fort Smith's most outstanding men, decided to ob-

tain this land for the town. The congressional bill passed February 11, 1871 stated that the "Secretary of the Interior was required to have them appraised and that they should not be disposed of unless they brought two-thirds or three-fourths of the appraisement." The Government's appraisal of the Fort Smith reservation was \$225,000.00, so when asked to donate it, Congress replied, "it was too big a job for too little a town."

The proposed attempt to get an overwhelmingly Republican Congress to forego a sale of property, and instead to donate this military reservation of land to a small town in a rebel state, was a courageous one. Mr. Carnall was a courageous man, and fortunately for Fort Smith a persistent one. The Congress of that time was not a "free spending" body. For thirteen years he worked to get a bill through Congress. Judge John H. Rogers, elected to Congress from this district in 1882, secured the passage of this bill through Congress in May 1884, giving the city of Fort Smith the Government Military Reservation for a grand public school endowment. It also gave the "rising city" a waterfront of over a mile and a half instead of 450 yards.

The first Post cemetery must have been established at the time of, or just prior to, the death of Surgeon Thomas Russell in 1819. It is reasonable to assume that any commanding officer laying out a new Post cemetery would include the former Post Cemetery within its boundaries. Early newspaper clippings make reference to this cemetery and one of them states, "Among the officers laid to rest here was Major William Bradford and Doctor Thomas Russell as well as several missionaries who came to spread the gospel to the Indians. A short time after the Civil War, in 1867, the old Post cemetery became a National Cemetery. By an order of President U. S. Grant, dated May 22, 1871, so much of the reservation at Fort Smith as was occupied by the National Cemetery was retained for the purpose of military burials and restored to the custody of the War Department.

The winter of 1870 and 1871 was very cold and the editors of the local papers implored their delinquent subscribers to bring in supplies of wood, corn, hay and fodder. An event, brushed off as just another European war, isolated from all local interest, occurred in France when Paris fell to the might of the Prussian Army, January 18, 1871. No one could know then that the treaties made at the cessation of hostilities would lay the foundation for World War I and II and the rise of a Godless nation which would become the common enemy of all Christian people in the World. What happened in Europe was very far away. Had not people immigrated to America to get away from all that? The news that the people of Fayetteville, Arkansas, had raised \$100,000.00 to erect buildings, so the University of Arkansas could open its doors early in 1872, created more interest.

According to old newspaper accounts, the Presbyterian Church always enjoyed at least one big picnic a year. "Song and Praise" services were held each Sunday at the Sunday School attended by both parents and children.

At the annual meeting of the Bible Society of Sebastian County held in August 1872, Rev. W. A. Sample was chosen President; Dr. J. W. Smelzer, Vice President; Dr. J. H. T. Main, Treasurer; Rev. H. M. Grenade, Secretary. Executive Committee: Asa Clarke, H. Stone, W. N. Ayres, Dr. Mathas and J. M. Hughes. Rev. Sample was reelected president the following year.

On July 10, 1872, Uncle Jerry and Aunt Sophia Kannady's night-blooming cereus bloomed, the first ever seen in Fort Smith and it was viewed by more than three hundred ladies and gentlemen. The sight of this exotic flower, slowly opening before their eyes, was a miracle of nature, and we are sure each lady who watched it made a vow to herself to have one just like it before another year passed. In fact, a "night-blooming cereus party" became quite the thing to have for several years.

Fort Smith was on the border of the Indian Territory and found itself the center of a condition that had existed to some extent long before the Civil War. The time had come for honest men to attempt to restore law and order. Ex-jayhawkers and ex-bush-whackers now turned into open bandits, still prevailed through the Northern and Western part of the state, while off in the Indian Territory the Tribes had begun to revert to savagery. What is now the state of Oklahoma sparsely settled by a few white settlers and by the thinly populated Indian Tribes to whom the land had been allotted, became the haven for outlaws whose names were notorious and many more unknown, but equally vicious and dangerous men.

Early in 1875 President U. S. Grant appointed Isaac Charles Parker to preside over the United States Court for the Western District of Arkansas. When he assumed office, he found that the Court which he was to make famous was in a state of disrepute, his predecessor in office having departed under threat of impeachment proceedings and the Court was held in scorn by decent people and law violators alike. For many years this court in Fort Smith was the only trial court in the civilized world from whose decisions there was no right of appeal.

For twenty-one years Judge Parker ruled with an iron hand over this vast territory, stretching from the Arkansas border to the Rockies and from Kansas to Texas, in all 74,000 square miles. It was in 1875 that he delivered his first ringing charge to a jury in the Federal Court and in the twenty-one years he presided he disposed of a grand total of 13,500 cases, of which 12,000 were criminal. In 151 of these cases the sentence of death was imposed and 88 men were hanged. A scaffold was built to hang twelve men at a time and September 3, 1875 saw the execution of six men. As

the testimony unraveled of the sordid tragic events, as jury and judge rose to their duty, it became apparent that this was no Roman holiday, but a grim battle against those who refused to recognize the life or property of his fellow men and who, by preying upon the decent people advancing to the west, were preventing its development into a great and decent land. None of these crimes were committed in Fort Smith. From the time of Judge Parker's appointment in 1875 until his death in 1896, the Court that he directed became the terror of the lawless old West.

World attention was focused on Our Town when newspaper reporters came in to report news of this court and for a time all decent life was overwhelmed and overlooked by people outside the State. It is to the everlasting credit of the citizens that they were able to carry on their lives in as normal a way as they did under the circumstances. They carried on the government of the town, and their private farming and business enterprises. They saw to it that all the children were given good schools. The churches saw to the spiritual need, their ministers and priests giving aid and comfort to all.

On the eve of America's Centennial year 1876, it was possible to travel from Fort Smith to Little Rock by rail. The rich land, mild climate and business opportunities attracted many people from the East. The population in the State grew. In the wake of Reconstruction, German settlers in larger numbers than ever before began coming into the State. The Irish, too, came though in smaller numbers than the Germans.

Enthusiasm knew no bounds and Arkansas fairly outdid itself at the National Centennial celebration in Philadelphia by erecting a separate state building under the direction of Henry Lewis Fletcher, for which it received as a prize a cast iron fountain, still standing in front of the old State Capitol building at Little Rock, and a group of ugly statuary long since vanished from its roof.

The centennial year 1876 was ushered in with a salute fired in Little Rock from a cannon, followed by twelve guns from the field pieces at the Arsenal, thirteen more for the original colonies, thirty-seven for the States and eleven for the Territories.

Fort Smith celebrated the occasion in fine style and, according to old newspapers, great expense. Mr. Ben T. DuVal delivered the centennial address at the request of the committee.

By the close of the year 1876, the Presbyterian congregation had moved to a new red brick church on the corner of Lafayette (Eighth) and Mulberry (B). Though the gray frame church on Second and 'B' built in 1842 was known for many years as the Presbyterian Church, it had been originally built with public funds and shared by other congregations. It had been deserted by most of the people during the War Between the States and occupied by strangers. With the end of hostilities, and the rebuilding of the

mercantile section of the town, a new Church meant new hope for every one. Many nostalgic memories of events and years long passed were carried in the hearts of the people when they moved into the new church.

After Rev. W. A. Sample's retirement in 1887, the Church lost by death two ministers in little more than two years, Dr. R. H. Kinnard and Rev. E. D. Gregory. Rev. Gregory was succeeded by Dr. Malcolm McNair McKay, who arrived in 1890 to begin a pastorate which lasted twenty-seven years.

As early as 1741 there was controversy in the Presbyterian Church in America caused, not by doctrinal differences, but by a great wave of evangelism that was sweeping across the country. Many of the old Scottish and Scotch Irish ministers could not approve of the new enthusiasm, as they called it, nor of the methods used by the evangelists. On the other hand, many of the younger ministers were heart and soul for it. The Old Side group believed that ministers for the American churches should be thoroughly educated in the Universities of Scotland or England. The New Side group felt that this was too slow a process. Besides, the universities of the old country did not know how to educate ministers for young America. The New Side group accordingly proceeded to build schools for the education of ministers. Then in 1758 the Old Side and New Side divisions were happily reunited in the one Church. The church increased in membership. After the Revolutionary War, with people moving West, and new immigrants by the thousands coming into America, the ministers realized they were too few in number to look after the converts and organize them into churches. Again the group wanted to lower the standard of education for the ministry and advocated the ordination of laymen who had not taken the regulation college and seminary training. A sharp controversy arose which resulted in the withdrawal of some Presbyterians and the formation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1810.

After the Civil War, many members of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church moved to Fort Smith. On April 29, 1888, with thirty-nine members, they organized a church known as the Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith, Arkansas, with Rev. S. H. McElvain as pastor. They met in an upstairs room over a store between Seventh and Eighth Streets on Garrison Avenue. The Session minutes of the organization of the congregation are given in full:

"Fort Smith, Arkansas
April 29, 1888

"The congregation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith, this day met in the Presbyterian Church. The Rev. S. H. McElvain, Moderator, and organized by electing Bros. Lewis D. Middleton, Jno. H. McClure and C. L. Davis as Ruling Elders. And on motion Bros. William Hendricks and A. Howen were elected

Deacons of the congregation. And Bros. John H. McClure and C. L. Davis, having hereafter been ordained and set apart as Ruling Elders in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church on motion next Sabbath the same being the first Sabbath in May next is appointed as the time for the ordination of Bros. L. D. Middleton as Ruling Elder and William Hendricks and A. Howen as Deacons of this congregation. And after the organization of the Sabbath School the congregation adjourned with benediction by Bro. S. H. McElvain.

S. H. McElvain, Moderator
Jno. H. McClure, Clerk."

During the pastorate of Rev. S. H. McElvain funds for a church building were collected and the work was begun.

The church enjoyed a steady growth from the beginning and between 1895 and 1899 completed the building under the leadership of Rev. F. M. Wylie, who was pastor from August 1895 to 1900. The building was on the corner of 9th and "B" streets. The Church reunited with the Presbyterian Church U. S. A. in 1906 and was renamed the Central Presbyterian Church. At this time the Presbyterian Church of Van Buren reunited with the Presbyterian Church U. S. A.

A new sanctuary, located on Rogers Avenue, was completed by this congregation and dedicated on Sunday, April 11, 1954.

The first Roman Catholic Church in Fort Smith was cosmopolitan—all nationalities worshipped there. Due to the large number of German emigrants to this community, the German Catholic Saint Joseph Society organized in 1884 saw the need of a church in which the German language would be used. In 1886, with the cooperation of Bishop Fitzgerald, who donated the block on North 18th and 19th and "B" upon which the church now stands, this group of zealous men started their work. The first priest was the Rev. Pius Boehm. The church was called St. Boniface. The Benedictine nuns started a school. With this beginning, the wooden buildings were, in time, replaced with beautiful brick buildings. The new brick church was dedicated in 1939.

The Jews in the community met on Holy Days in a store building on Garrison Avenue. Their first confirmation service was in the Christian Church on 7th and "C" Streets built in 1886. By 1892 the Jewish Temple on the corner of Eleventh and "E" streets was completed and the second confirmation service was held there. A. Traugott was the first Rabbi. (The first Temple was sold to the Lutheran Church and the new one on Forty-seventh Street was dedicated April 29, 1956. The Jewish calendar year was Iyer 18, 5716).

The members of the First Baptist Church helped the colored people organize their first congregation and gave them the little log church on Fourth Street. By 1898 the colored people had seven churches, three Baptist and four Methodist.

It was as though nature itself would give the citizens of Fort Smith one last event to remember for all time before the close of the century. On the night of January 11, 1898, the town was struck by a devastating cyclone. Many pioneer buildings and landmarks were destroyed. More than fifty people lost their lives and countless others were injured.

The "Angelus Bell" on the Immaculate Conception Church did not ring at six o'clock the morning after the storm. The tower in which the bell was hung was destroyed and the bell was cracked. The building itself was partially wrecked. Two Methodist churches were damaged. The Baptist Church on the corner of Thirteenth and Grand Avenue was gone, completely wiped away. The frame building represented fifty years of sacrifice and had been built in 1884. The congregation had not had a permanent home from the time it had given the little log church to its colored members. It had met in a school house, in Wirsing's Hall, it had held brush arbor meetings in the summer.

The Sunday after the storm the congregation gathered in the red brick Presbyterian Church on Eighth and "B" Streets to hold a prayer meeting and discuss future plans. The First Presbyterian, the Cumberland Presbyterian, Christian and Lutheran Churches and the Jewish Synagogue, offered the use of their houses of worship. The offers were declined and in the end the Baptists rented another hall and started anew their struggle to rebuild. October 22, 1899 they had their first service in the new church which had been built on the location of the old.

Through Rev. George F. Degen, rector in charge, the first hospital in this part of the state was organized by the Episcopal Church and called St. Johns. It opened its doors in 1887. The funds for the hospital were obtained by a circle of women called the "B's". In this group were Mrs. C. M. Barnes, Mrs. Stephen Wheeler, Mrs. M. H. Sandels, Mrs. J. H. Hamilton, Mrs. Jennie Dillard, Mrs. M. A. Bomford, Mrs. H. A. Mayers, Mrs. Robert Rutherford, Mrs. A. Dunlap, Mrs. Fry and Mrs. Fred Hichen.

This hospital was later, through changes merged into the Belle Point and Sparks Memorial Hospital. All faiths worked to support this hospital. St. Edwards Infirmary was not opened until 1905, when the second convent occupied by the Sisters of Mercy at St. Anns was remodeled. The old frame building was veneered with brick, wide porches were added and supported with huge Corinthian columns.

The Western section of our State, with Fort Smith its center, has always been progressive, clinging to the best of the old, but always looking forward toward the future. The first fair association that was considered successful was that of Western Arkansas organized in 1880. The fair of 1883 was the envy of the State. With Balloon ascensions, horse races for large purses, a war dance,

peace and corn dances and ball plays by the Osage Indians, drill by the "Border Rifles," grand stock parade, awards in several departments, it is no wonder the first organization of the local Chamber of Commerce in 1887 took for its theme "Programs for Progress."

Mr. George Tilles installed the first telephone exchange in 1882. The first street car line made its appearance on Garrison Avenue. Mr. Samuel McCloud owned it. Of course it was pulled by a mule, but it was progress. The same year 1883, the "Daily Herald" urged the erection of street lamps, the construction of more sidewalks, drains and sewers, sprinkling of the streets and the erection of more factories and modern renting houses and deplored the prevailing sand storms on Garrison Avenue. By 1898 all this had been accomplished and more—gas and electric lights, a magnificent system of water works and railroads. The Indian Territory, upon Fort Smith's Western border was ready to be thrown open to general settlement.

It can be truly said that life in Arkansas is different from life in any other place in the United States. The impact of a migrating Southern and Eastern culture upon a roaring Western frontier was felt and lived by the people of Our Town. Arkansas had solved its problems of Reconstruction in an eminently characteristic way by threatening to wage anew the Civil War in 1874. It ended when two rival governors, Joseph Brooks and Elisha Baxter, neither of whom had been legally elected, fought it out in Little Rock, a tragic comedy which the enthralled citizens watched from windows and housetops. The "Embattled Farmers" had simply sprung up in arms as at Lexington and the thing was over. The Arkansans chose to call it the "Brooks-Baxter war."

It was a time of tragedy, and a time for change. A new generation was picking up the responsibility of the town. Life was exciting. Growth, though apparent on the surface, did not change the heart. Arkansas, like the rest of the South, lived through its period of thought and dreams of the great days before the War, grown respectable in retrospect.

The Confederacy remained as a haunting memory, to begin disappearing at last in the fierce spirit of violent partisan feeling caused by the war with Spain in the spring of 1898.



The SEAL of The
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
In The United States

THE DOVE—Represents the Holy Spirit (John 1:32): "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him."

THE STAR—Represents Christ Himself (Numbers 24:17): "There shall come a Star out of Jacob," and Revelation 22:16, where Jesus says, "I am . . . the bright and morning star."

THE LAMP—On the right-hand section of the shield represents the Witnessing Church (Matthew 5:14, 16): "Ye are the light of the world . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." The Latin words written below the shield, "Lux lucet in tenebris," mean "The light shineth in the darkness."

THE BURNING BUSH—The symbol of the Scottish Churches and other branches of the great Presbyterian family, represents the Indestructible Church. The Latin words which generally accompany this symbol, "Nec Tamen Consumebatur," "And yet it was not consumed," are a reference to the burning bush which Moses saw at Mount Sinai, as described in the third chapter of Exodus. The reason the Church is not consumed and destroyed by opposition and persecution of the world is that God is in the midst of the Church. This was the chief lesson taught Moses by that vision of the burning bush, out of which God spoke to him.

THE LAUREL WREATH—At the bottom represents Victory and the Church Triumphant.

INTRODUCTION OF PART II

Ministers of First Presbyterian Church 1846 - 1960

- The Reverend W. K. Marshall, D.D., 1846-1850
- The Reverend Cephas Washburn, 1850-1856
- The Reverend J. C. Stewart, 1857-1858—Stated Supply
- The Reverend W. A. Sample, 1859-1863
- The Reverend H. T. Morton, 1866-1868
- The Reverend W. A. Sample, 1868-1888
- The Reverend R. H. Kinnard, April 1888-June 1888
- The Reverend E. D. Gregory, 1888-1890
- The Reverend Malcolm McNair McKay, D.D., 1890-1917
- The Reverend William W. Harrison, D.D., 1917-1925
- The Reverend Frank P. Anderson, D.D., 1925-1932
- The Reverend J. W. Hickman, D.D., 1932-1952
- The Reverend James E. Fogartie, 1952-1955
- The Reverend Thomas B. Gallaher, D.D., 1956-

F O R E W O R D

Among Presbyterians The Church of Scotland has been looked upon as the Mother of our Church; her sons and daughters have emigrated to every other land. They have carried with them their faith and their religion. Wherever they have gone, a school house has followed the Church and at times preceded it. Presbyterianism represents a democratic ideal. It is in essence a denial of the traditional claim of the State to exercise authority in matters of faith. It reserves the essential rights to the worshippers; it gives powers to the congregation.

The Presbyterian Church in the United States has four church courts. Those who wish to be informed Presbyterians should read what our Book of Church Order has to say about the composition and functions of each of these courts.

The SESSION is composed of the pastor, or pastors, and the ruling elders of an individual church. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in word and doctrine." (I Timothy 5:17). This passage is our authority for having two kinds of elders in the Presbyterian Church, teaching elders (ministers) and ruling elders. In general, as stated in the Book of Church Order, "the church session is charged with maintaining the spiritual government of the church."

Some people are perplexed by finding the word bishop in the New Testament. It occurs in five different places. In Act 20:17 Paul sends for the elders of the Church at Ephesus. In Acts 20:28 he calls these same men bishops. In Titus 1:15 Paul directs that elders should be ordained in every city. In Titus 1:7 he refers to these same men as bishops. It is perfectly clear that elders and bishops are identical in the New Testament. The fact that elders were sometimes called bishops had a very important bearing upon the development of church government in the centuries that followed.

The PRESBYTERY consists of all the ministers and one ruling elder from each church within a certain district. The Presbytery has jurisdiction over the ministers and churches within that district. In I Timothy 4:14 Paul exhorts Timothy in this language: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." Here we have the very word "presbytery" in the New Testament. That presbytery may not have been like a modern presbytery in every detail, but it embodied the principle.

The SYNOD consists of all ministers and one ruling elder from each church in a district comprising at least three presbyteries. The synod has supervision of all the presbyteries within its bounds.

The GENERAL ASSEMBLY is the highest court of the church and represents in one body all the churches thereof. It consists of commissioners from all the presbyteries in the following proportion: every presbytery is entitled to send one minister and one ruling elder, but if the number of communicants in its churches and ministers on its roll be over 4,000, it is entitled to send an additional minister and ruling elder; and in like proportion for every 4,000 communicants and ministers. The General Assembly has supervision of the whole church and all its work.

In the days of Paul and Barnabus, a question of far-reaching importance arose in the church at Antioch. The question was referred to a Church Council which met in Jerusalem. Please turn to the fifteenth chapter of Acts and read the whole proceedings of that council. Note well that the Council was composed of apostles

and elders. Note also that this Council, composed of apostles and elders, after full deliberation, settled the question authoritatively and the church at Antioch and all the other churches accepted its decision. There was a tie that bound these New Testament churches together into one church.

The DEACONS: The office of deacon is a very important office in the Presbyterian Church. Our Book of Church Order has this, and a great deal more, to say about deacons: "The office is one of sympathy and service. In general, it is the duty of the deacons to assist those members of the congregation who are in need or distress and to look after the temporal affairs of the church. Their work is done under the authority and supervision of the session."

The word deacon occurs in only two passages in the New Testament. In Phillipians 1:1 Paul sends his greetings to the bishops (elders) and deacons of the church at Philippi. In I Timothy 3:10-13 he describes the qualifications of deacons but says nothing of their duties.

However, we have every reason to believe that "the seven" who were chosen in the Sixth chapter of Acts were deacons. The special work assigned these seven deacons in the sixth chapter of Acts was to minister to the poor and thus enable the Apostles to give themselves entirely to the ministry of the Word and to prayer.

The Presbyterian Church has tried to model its government after the pattern given in the New Testament. While we say this, we do well to remember that the greatest church is not necessarily the one that has the most Scriptural form of government, but the one that holds in purest form the Gospel of Christ, the one that has the most of His spirit, and that is doing most to advance His Kingdom on earth.



First Presbyterian Church—1876-1900
North 8th and "B" Streets



First Presbyterian Church
Built 1900 - North 12th and "B" Streets

PART TWO

CHAPTER 1

The Presbyterians, after thirty-four years of worship in the Church on Second Street, decided to build a new church. We are sure the decision came after much deliberation and discussion. The population of the town was spreading eastward and moving away from the river. The first church ever built in Our Town had outlived its original purpose. It had witnessed the making of history. Permanent pastors for the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches, as well as traveling pastors who dropped in for special occasions, had delivered sermons from the pulpit. Some of the first meetings of the town government were held there. It had seen service as a hospital and a school, and ended its days as a hotel.

A congregational meeting was called March 3, 1873, to consider the matter of building a new church. After several meetings, it was decided to purchase a lot on the corner of Lafayette and Mulberry, now 8th and B Streets. Many members were pessimistic concerning the wisdom of locating a new church so far away! Finally, however, it was decided to take the daring step.

The women of the congregation, in the many and various ways known to women, raised the large sum of \$600.00 to pay for the ground, truly a large sum in those days. A building committee, consisting of Major James H. Sparks, Dr. J. W. Smelzer, and Captain Hubbard Stone, was appointed to bring back reports, plans, and estimates. J. N. Hewes, J. Q. Churchill, J. T. Hanneford, together with three women, whose names are not recorded, were appointed a finance committee.

January 3, 1876, was the day of the ground breaking ceremony. The following information is gathered from the "Fort Smith Elevator," Frank Weaver, Editor: "On Tuesday morning, pursuant to previous notice, the cornerstone of the new Presbyterian Church of the Old School was laid at the corner of Mulberry and Lafayette Streets, in the presence of a large gathering of the members and friends of the Church. The Pastor, the Rev. W. A. Sample, and Elder John F. Wheeler, broke the first ground.

"The ceremonies were interesting and impressive. They were opened with prayer by the Pastor who also delivered a short and appropriate address. The cornerstone was laid by Mr. Sam Lawrence, the contractor, aided by Mr. J. H. Read. The stone was laid in the Northeast corner. After it was pronounced set by the workmen in charge, it was put to the test of the level and the square by a master overseer who was present, then the stone was pronounced good, true, and square work, just such work as is fit for the builder's use.

"On the eastern face of the stone is cut the word Ebenezer (Hitherto hath the Lord led us). On the northern face is cut, erected 1876, Organized 1846. On top of the stone that covers the cornerstone with a triangle, is cut the word, Jehovah. Several deposits were made in the stone: a history of the Church from 1846; a list of all its members and a list of its living members; a history of the Sunday School with its officers, teachers and members; a copy of the Confession of Faith; copies of the Herald and other papers, a copy of the Independent and several items of interest from different persons and also some old coins and some new ones.

"One pleasant feature was the presence of Mrs. Margaret Baird, the only survivor of the four charter members. In her own writing she stated this fact and the paper was deposited in the cornerstone.

"The ceremonies closed with prayer and a benediction, and the assembly dispersed, each one wishing that the work so well begun might be pressed to an early and successful completion.

"The names of those joining in the ceremony follow: The Rev. W. A. Sample, Judge John F. Wheeler, Major James H. Sparks, Mrs. Margaret Baird, Mrs. S. B. Atkinson, Jerry R. Kannady, Captain Hubbard Stone, Mrs. W. W. Perry, B. F. Atkinson, G. H. Williams, Mrs. Hubbard Stone, Mrs. J. H. Sparks, Mrs. W. A. Sample, Mrs. Louis Miller, Miss Ozete Atkinson, Henry Reutzel, Mrs. S. B. Carrington, Mrs. Lucy Fredberg, Miss Annie Baines, Miss Nannie Haglin, Mrs. Thomas Barnes, Mrs. James Barnes, Miss Lilly Pryor, S. M. Hamilton, William N. Fishback, Sam Lawrence, Miss Alice Sample, Miss Lucy Sparks, Mrs. J. R. Cannady, Mrs. J. H. T. Main, Miss Kate Perry, Miss Sarah Clark, Mrs. Belle Pierce, Mrs. Sabra Warren, Abel Warren, A. Selig, D. B. Sparks, George Sengel, Willie Sample, John Smith P., S. B. Carrington, Harry Miller, Stewart Miller, Louis Fishback, Dr. C. W. Pierce, J. C. Clarke, J. H. Read, Ernest Carrington, Nannie Atkinson, Alva Haglin, Bettie Stone and Ben Atkinson."

January 30, 1877

The church was completed this same year, but there is no record of the first service held there. The membership at this time was one hundred and fifty. An old newspaper clipping records the following: "The cost of the new Presbyterian Church was about \$6000.00 and the church is now out of debt. Much credit is due the lady members for their zeal and untiring efforts in assisting to liquidate the debts against the church. There exists a yellowed old receipt which was issued by the building committee to the "First Presbyterian Hope Society" for the sum of \$10.00 contributed to the "Auxiliary Fund." Another old clipping reads:

"The Presbyterian Church is an interesting and attractive structure with its garlanded walls. The Virginia creeper, planted by Miss Carrie Shumard from the home of her mother, Mrs. Pierce, is especially graceful and beautiful, its green mingled with tints of red and gold. The neighborhood is quiet, cool, and clean. One of these days its chief attraction will be the old vine clad church around the corner."

The following paragraphs are taken from an article written by Mrs. Lucy Sparks Yantis, entitled "Some Personal Recollections":

"We thought the new church, as it grew, very beautiful with its Gothic windows of frosted glass, its square tower and its grassy yard enclosed by a neat white paling fence. As time went on, the red bricks mellowed and were covered with English Ivy, the original roots coming from the old fashioned brick home of my childhood. The budget did not cover furnishings for the new church, and we used an old long horsehair sofa with rolling ends which belonged to one of the church families; two pulpit chairs and the communion table and the pulpit which had served in the little frame chapel. This was before the day of individual communion service, and on the Lord's Table there stood two tall silver goblets beside the urn and silver plates. (This service is preserved in our church today).

"We had no pews, only folding chairs, which caused considerable commotion at times. The choir sang in a gallery at the back and to see them it was necessary to turn squarely around in your seat, which usually added to the clatter of the unsteady chairs. The pastor must have had steady nerves and a patient nature. There were strips of burlap sacking in the aisles, but a carpet replaced this before many years. Once each month there was a children's service in the afternoon and it was at this service that the babies were baptized.

"In the first years of this little church, the members still lived close to the river, and it was not easy to get to services, as we must wade through dust in summer and mud in winter, carrying coal oil lanterns on dark nights to prevent falling into ditches or stumbling over sleeping cows. However, despite these difficulties, evening services and prayer meetings were well attended, probably not because people were any more religious then than now, but because they were occasions for social meeting and relaxation. When people stayed home five nights a week, it was pleasant to get out the other two, despite the lanterns, arctic overshoes and flannel mufflers. The church in those days in a small town was the center of much social activity for the young people as well as the older ones, and the young girl who had no escort for Wednesday and Sunday evening services felt herself to be a wallflower indeed. Two good friends with any two of the young men would form what might now be called a "double date" and many a courtship flourished and grew on Wednesday and Sunday nights.

"Of course there were church socials held in the homes of the members, also the meetings of the Ladies Aid and Missionary Societies were pleasant social events where much conversation, as well as good works, prevailed. All of these things drew the members of a small church into very close bonds of fellowship, and in a very real sense they felt themselves to be truly members of one family. In the same way, also, the relationship of pastor and people was very tender and close, carrying out the Biblical description of the shepherd and his flock."

There is an amusing little story told of this time which illustrates this fact. The study of Mr. Sample, the beloved pastor of the Church, was up in the little steeple, and it is said that when a young man of his congregation wished to propose marriage to a certain young lady, also a member of the congregation, whose father had recently died, he felt he must receive permission from the pastor. So he climbed the steep stairs leading to the pastor's study where, nervous and breathless, he made his request for the hand of his beloved, which was readily granted by an amused and sympathetic minister. (The young man was Mr. Len O'Neal, one of the early deacons, and his bride was Miss Chloe Clarke, who became the parents of Eva O'Neal, now Mrs. Tom Drake).

From an article written by Mrs. R. G. Bulgin, the great-grandmother of Lewis Phillips, Jr., and David Phillips of this Church, are copied the following interesting facts on the choir and music:

"A little melodeon had furnished the music in the frame church on Second Street and it was used in the new church until, through the generosity of members and friends, a beautiful Beatty cabinet organ took its place. The new organ arrived by steamboat one Sunday afternoon and was unloaded from the wharf at the foot of Garrison Avenue. To protect it, the men of the church got some negroes with a dray to haul it to the church that same afternoon."

The little melodeon was then taken across the street to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Sample, where the Sunday School children often came after school to practice their songs with Mrs. Sample. Mr. J. P. Clarke, who had played the melodeon in the old church was the organist until his daughter, Miss Chloe Clarke, took his place. The little organ bench used by her grandfather and her mother for so many years is now treasured by Mrs. Tom Drake. (The melodeon referred to is now a prized possession of Mrs. Alice Bulgin Torreyson of Little Rock, having been given to her by Mrs. Sample. Mrs. Torreyson is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bulgin and was the first baby to be baptized in the new church.)

Many faithful choir members are named in old records of this period: Miss Elise Griffing, Miss Grace Kearn, Mr. Stoney Griffing,



Rev. W. A. Sample
Pastor of First
Presbyterian Church
1859 - 1863
1868 - 1888



Rev. Malcolm McNair
McKay, D.D.
Pastor of First
Presbyterian Church
1890 - 1917



This little Melodeon was used in the Church on Second Street
and in the Church at Eighth and "B"

Dr. A. E. Kimmons and Mr. W. M. Mellette. Dr. Hatchett and Miss Alice Sample are also among those named.

An old clipping was found in a scrapbook of this period which describes an Oratorio given in the little brick church on June 8, 1877. This program is printed in red ink and adorned with many scrolls and curlicues. In the program, sandwiched between two anthems, "Behold What Manner of Love God Hath" and "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth" was a duet entitled "If Papa Were Only Ready." No one knows who sang the duet, and one can only surmise for what event Papa was unprepared!

At the Centennial Anniversary of Washington Irving, which was celebrated at Belle Grove School, the choir of the First Presbyterian Church furnished the music. The editor failed to name the beautiful singer of whom he wrote, "There is one voice in it with the music of the nightingale and full of that bird's sweetness in a night song." (From the Fort Smith Herald, April 4, 1883.)

The little church was the scene of many weddings. The descendants of a few of those couples are on the rolls of the First Church today. Also there were the funerals of many members who had helped organize the original church and who had worked faithfully for the new church so dear to them. One was that of Mrs. W. A. Sample who died in 1887 and who was so beloved by the people of Fort Smith that it is said, "the whole town came in mourning to pay their tribute to her beautiful life."

In 1888 Mr. Sample, broken by the loss of his wife and in feeble health, felt the necessity of leaving his beloved congregation and his resignation, after twenty-five years of service, was sorrowfully accepted.

Two memorials to Mr. and Mrs. Sample are preserved in the First Presbyterian Church today. The middle panel of one of the stained glass windows contains Mrs. Sample's name and the date of her death. In memory of Mr. Sample there is a bronze plaque in the vestibule, suitably inscribed, which was given forty years ago by friends who had known and loved him as a dear friend and a beloved pastor.

The Rev. R. H. Kinnard of Kentucky accepted a call to this Church in the spring of 1888, but an untimely death ended his service after only one month. A young seminary student, W. H. Bradley, supplied the pulpit from June until September of that year.

Later that same year, the Rev. E. D. Gregory of Kentucky accepted the call to become the pastor. He was a brilliant young man and much beloved by his congregation, and friends outside the church.

Soon after coming to Fort Smith he married Miss Emily Farrow, a member of his congregation. He was removed by death after a pastorate of just two years. He was buried in Oak Cemetery, where a monument was erected to his memory by children of the Sunday School. His widow was buried here later. A panel in one of the stained glass windows in our present sanctuary is inscribed with his name and the date of his death. His ministry, although tragically short, was very fruitful as over one hundred members were added to the church rolls.

In 1889 the Rev. Malcolm McNair McKay of Griffin, Georgia, accepted a call to this Church. Dr. McKay was of Scotch descent and was a very learned and scholarly man. In 1891 First Church purchased a lot and a half on North 16th and A Streets for \$1500.00 where the Manse was built by Mr. Alec Hoffman at an approximate cost of \$2000.00. Later, additions were made for the family of Dr. McKay which consisted of his wife, two sons, Malcolm and Archie, three daughters, Jessie, Mary, and Catherine, and Mrs. McKay's sister, Miss Fanny McDowell. Later ministers occupied this same Manse, with alterations and improvements, until the present Manse was built.

Dr. McKay remained as minister of the First Church until 1917. His ministry was fruitful from its beginning.

As the years passed, and the membership grew, and the town was growing away from the river section, the need for a new church was felt. In the early part of the year 1898 a building committee was named. There is a bronze plaque in the vestibule of the church inscribed with their names which are as follows: Henry C. Read, Chairman; A. E. Kimmons, Treasurer; L. P. Barkdull, James F. Read, Dr. J. S. McCorkle, J. M. Sloan, Eugene Henderson, T. J. Wright, George T. Sparks, George Sengel, J. M. Tenny, T. C. Davis. This plaque was given by Mrs. Henry C. Read as a memorial to Mr. Read.

The cornerstone was laid at 4:30 p.m. October 28, 1898, with appropriate ceremonies. A hymn "The Precious Firmament on High" was sung and a prayer made by the Rev. B. F. Bascomb, pastor of the Van Buren church. In the stone was placed a Bible, copies of the daily newspapers, an announcement of the service being held, a history of the church from 1846 until 1898, also a list of the officers, teachers and pupils of the Sunday School, a history of the Ladies Aid Society, the Kings Daughters and the names of the building committee. The cornerstone was then swung into place under the supervision of the chairman of the building committee, Mr. Henry C. Read. The hymn "Christ is Made the Sure Foundation" was sung and a prayer offered by a Methodist minister. The long meter Doxology was then sung and the benediction pronounced by the Rev. F. M. Wiley of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

There followed two years of much work by the building committee, the pastor and the officers of the church, and much sacrificial giving by the congregation.

At this time it became necessary to borrow money, so a loan for \$2000.00 was made at a St. Louis bank. The note was secured by Mr. Josiah Foster, Grandfather of Miss Virginia Foster of this congregation. A copy of the note made from the original, possessed by Mrs. Joe Foster, is in an old scrapbook.

In July 1900 the handsome church was completed at a cost of \$18,000.00. Including furniture, the total cost (not including the cost of the organ) was \$22,500.00.

On Wednesday, May 9th, 1900, the last prayer meeting was held in the church on 8th and B. At this service seven of the original members at the dedication of that church were present: Samuel Lawrence, the contractor, John Smith P., Mr. and Mrs. R. G. Bulgin, Mrs. A. Haglin, and Mr. and Mrs. George Sengel. On Sunday, May 13, 1900, the last service was held in the little ivy covered church, with its hallowed and sacred memories. The service was concluded with the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Many clippings, interesting and amusing might be included if space permitted, but in the old records are names often mentioned which are familiar to older members of this congregation and from many of whom some of our present members are descended. In accounts of concerts, Sunday School parties and plays were found some of these names: Miss Elise Griffing, Dr. and Mrs. A. E. Kimmons, Mr. and Mrs. Allen D. Morris, Dr. and Mrs. McKay, Mrs. Torreyson, Misses Ina Boles and Ethel Sengel, Mr. T. C. Davis, Mrs. R. A. Honsberger, and Mr. J. D. VanWinkle. Planning one of the Christmas parties were Judge John H. Rogers, Mrs. Torreyson, Misses Mae Lawrence, Christine Seeley, Mrs. Rogers, Mrs. R. A. Clarkson, Mrs. McKay, Messrs. George Sengel, T. C. Davis, Allen D. Morris, James F. Read, Henry C. Read.

In the records of the Ladies Aid Society, we find these names: Mrs. Emilie Hunt, Mrs. S. H. Sherlock, Miss Etta Clarkson, Mrs. R. A. Clarkson, Mrs. F. J. Klein, Miss Minnie Barkdull, Mrs. Edgar Faucette, Mrs. Charles E. Warner.

The following is the roll of the Sunday School at the time of the removal from the 8th Street church:

LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL OCTOBER 23rd, 1898

J. D. VanWinkle, Supt., H. C. Read, Asst. Supt., A. E. Kimmons, Sec., Geo. T. Sparks, Treas.

Infant Class: Mrs. Jas. E. Weaver, Teacher:

Mary Phillips, Amelia Harding, Marie Class, Willie Yadon, Adele Read, Dorothy Read, Edna Patterson, Lorena Cruise, Elizabeth Eadie, Salome Eadie, Ethel Whybark, Ruth Mulholland, Helen Brown, Lela Harnes, Louville Thomas, Willie May Hays, Margaret Griffing, Nannie Linch, Lelia Grew, Jake Guler, Tom Davis Van Winkle, James Weaver, James Sparks, Mont Johnston, Charlie Hunt, Eugene Sloan, Earl King, Albert Young, Hugh Mulholland, Aubrey Wright, Beauford Sengel, James Wenderoth, Andrew Price, Frank Brown, Randolph Sengel, Bordley Kimmons, Hynes Sparks, Arthur Hinkle.

Miss Elise S. Griffing, Teacher:

John Youmans, Robert Beard, Aubrey Jones, Tom Griffing, Neal Sparks, Stanley Houser.

Miss Henrietta Clarkson, Teacher:

Emily Wenderoth, Natalie Salls, Julia Thompson, Lucy Davis, Mary Harding, Blanche Yadon, Bert Gates, Marguerite Sengel, Lida Howard.

Miss Kate Faucette, Teacher:

Ada Young, Esther Sennert, Phoebe Speer, Amelie Guler, Nada Whybark, Mary Youmans, Frances Weaver, Irene Hynes, Lillie Sickles, Laura Farmer, George Farmer.

Mrs. A. E. Kimmons, Teacher:

John Bender, William Eadie, Eugene Henderson, Jimmie Klein, Lewis Phillips, Fred Wenderoth, Gordon VanWinkle, Walter Howard, Cecil Warner.

Mrs. W. B. Hendrix, Teacher:

Berkley Sloan, Annie Read, Annie Henderson, Catherine McKay, Maggie Geiger, Maude King, Kate Lawrence.

Miss Nellie Mohler, Teacher:

Emmitt Edrington, Mack Nance, Harry Lyman, Charlie Smythe, Everett Moulton.

Miss Birdie Smythe, Teacher:

Dave Sparks, Early Sengel, Collier Wenderoth, Oscar Gates, Keith Boles, Hugh Wright, Frazer Read.

Miss Maggie Boles, Teacher:

Johnie Mathews, Elizabeth VanWinkle, Louise Davis, Irma Davis, Nellie Young, Marie Kimmons, Fay Alexander.

Mrs. F. L. Nance, Teacher:

Mary Hynes, Margaret Price, Rebecca Read, May Speer, Agnes Winchester, Sara Beard.

- Miss Emma E. Lawrence, Teacher:
Helen Class, Clyde Geiger, Eva O'Neal, Bernice Seeley, Ethel Yadon.
- Mrs. John H. Rogers, Teacher:
John Martyn, Roy Lawrence, Harry Warner, Malcolm McKay, Arthur VanWinkle, Joe Price.
- Mrs. C. E. Warner, Teacher:
Ethel Foster, Erna Wright, Lula Class, Ethel Salls, Mae Yadon, Lynette Kimmons, Nellie Barling, Ida Howard.
- Miss M. Barkdull, Teacher:
Mary McKay, Clara Harding, Lillie Belle Guler, Ruth Edrington, Mary Howard, Lydie Howard, Margaret Murta, Georgina Lyman, Helen Pope, Mamie Wright, Katherine Barnes.
- T. C. Davis, Teacher:
Benjamin Johnston, Jerome Sengel, Wallace Gill, Randolph Rogers.
- Miss Laura Nance, Teacher:
Rector Barling, Walter Patterson, John Murta, Dibrell Hynes, Clarence VanWinkle.
- Mrs. M. McN. McKay, Teacher:
Star Weaver, Lucia Sloan, Ida Salls, Beula Sare, Maude Alexander, Maude Barnes.
- Mrs. John Smith P., Teacher:
Mary Geiger, Myrtle Keam.
- Mr. F. J. Klein, Teacher:
Charley Warner, George Faucett, Guy Hammett, Lutie Smythe, Fred Reutzel, Samuel Lawrence, Fred Klein, Willis Johnson, Jay Cordell, Henry Martyn.
- Mr. James F. Read, Teacher:
Jessie McKay, Flora Boles, Eva Beard, Laura Klein, Ethel Sengel, Bessie Rogers, Olive Seeley, Stuart McCorkle, Pearl Mohler, Elmer Edrington, Isla Sloan.
- Mr. George Sengel, Teacher:
Fletcher Faucett, Sam Nicholson, Thomas Boles, George Sengel, Jr., Fred Johnston, Roy Johnston, Tom Edrington, Hume Park, Richard Bulgin, Jere Sparks, Douglas Rogers.
- Mrs. R. A. Clarkson, Teacher:
Mae Lawrence, Claire Hall, Emma Beard, Sallie Shuford, Susie Burchan, Renna Pope, Christine Seeley, Gertrude Whybark.
- Mr. H. C. Read, Teacher:
H. H. Bensonm, Mr. Beiseicle.

"The ivy covered brick church was sold for \$2000.00, during the construction of the new church, to a German Athletic Club for a gymnasium or turnverin, much to the horror of many staid Presbyterians.

Not a few Fort Smithians have pleasing recollections of eating rye bread sandwiches, nearly a foot in diameter, drinking tall steins of beer while the walls of the one time Presbyterian Church resounded with merrymaking. In 1905 the building was remodeled, the steeple being pulled down and an addition for a bowling alley erected.

The Athletic Club sold the building in 1917 to the Watson and Avon Ice Cream Company of Little Rock. In 1926 it was purchased by the Ward Ice Industries, and it is now being razed by its owner. Today the staccato din of crowbars and hammers has awakened in the older residents memories of other sounds; the stately organ tones of a Presbyterian Church—the merry singing in a German Turnverein."

Today, 1960, there is a used car lot on the historic old corner of 8th and B Streets. Thus do the wheels of progress turn.

CHAPTER 2

The dedication of the completed sanctuary on North 12th and "B" street took place July 8th, 1900, at the morning service. An old bulletin gives the following order of worship:

Voluntary

Gloria Patria

Invocation—Rev. S. W. Davies, D.D.

Anthem—"Great and Marvelous"

Scripture

Solo—"I Will Give Thee Rest"—Miss Wolfenberger

Delivery of church keys to Mr. H. C. Read, Chairman of Building Committee

Solo—"My Redeemer"—Miss Grace Keam

Dedicatory Prayer by the Pastor

Dedicatory Hymn by the Congregation

Committing of keys to Deacons by the Rev. S. W. Davies in behalf of Session

Offertory—"Remember Thy Tender Mercies"—

Miss Griffing, Mrs. Kimmons, Mrs. Seeley, Miss Wolfenberger, Miss Graham and Messrs. Nickelson, Dyke, Johnston, and Kimmons

Response in behalf of Deacons by Mr. L. P. Barkdull

Hymn 166

Benediction

Numerous newspaper clippings give interesting sidelights on the events of this time. One is a quotation from the architect of the Boston Art Museum, who while passing through Fort Smith was taken to see the new church. His comment was, "That is the finest bit of Gothic Architecture that I have seen." (Quoted by Henry C. Read).

Another clipping tells the story of the beautiful rose window, whose glowing colors enrich the front wall of the church. It is a memorial to the Travelers Protective Association, an organization of traveling men of that time. Mrs. Ned Thurman, the wife of a prominent traveling salesman of this city, knowing the loneliness of these men who must often be away from home and loved ones over Sunday, determined to do something to give them a welcome and recognition in the new church. Assisted by her husband she invited the traveling men of her acquaintance to take part in giving a window which would in the coming years, be a memorial, and an invitation to all travelers to rest in the sanctuary as in their own home church. The good work was accomplished and the beautiful rose window smiles its welcome to you, and a welcome to the stranger within our gates.

Still another clipping congratulates the building committee on its decision to do "light decorating in the church now instead of leaving the walls in the sand finish. It will be cheaper now and it will be a long time, after we shall have gotten the pews and carpet in, before we would be willing to erect a scaffolding over them. The effect of the decorations on the arched trusses is very fine and will be more so when lighted by the electric bulbs."

An amusing article has this comment: "The broad beautiful aisles of the new church will prove, we clearly see, a great temptation to many of our young ladies who have, up to this time, been heroically resisting the entreaties of sighing swains that they would name the day. But to walk down the long dream aisle, under the light of 125 electric bulbs all "done up"—the young ladies we mean—in silk and satin and flowers and flowing veils, think of it! Now is your time boys. Press the argument at this auspicious moment. As the parson said, when he was calling for \$500 subscriptions—"Who will be the first"?

There is no record as to the first bride to walk down "those broad and beautiful aisles," but in these more than fifty years it has been the scene of many beautiful weddings. Here hundreds of babies have been dedicated to God. Here also hundreds of people have stood before the minister to repeat their vows of church membership. And in this same sacred spot have been held the last rites for devoted members of this church, who have worshipped and glorified their God within the walls of this sanctuary, and who have been called home to be forever with the Lord.

Scattered clippings also reveal that the women of this day were following in the steps of those who had preceded them in the earlier churches, and were making every effort to raise the money for the pipe organ to complete the new sanctuary. One clipping states, that at a meeting of the Ladies Aid plans were to be made for raising organ funds, by inviting free will offerings of \$5.00 from each of those ladies (and everyone else). Further it is emphasized there will be no canvass as Dr. McKay does not favor this method, nor does he favor silver teas or bazaars.

Apparently the women succeeded, as (under the leadership of Mrs. J. K. Kimmons) the new organ was dedicated on September 3rd 1903. One of our older members says that the women also made the money to purchase the original pulpit. Also she remembers that when the beautiful red carpet was first laid, the women conceived the idea of bringing portable heaters and "sad irons" with which, when properly heated, the entire carpet was carefully ironed by the good women on their knees. The idea of course was that the heat would kill the moth larvae! Not very scientific to be sure, but certainly an act of devotion!

The First Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith has undertaken several projects of Home Mission work since its organization.

In 1859 when the Rev. W. A. Sample was in the early years of his ministry, he held monthly meetings at Jenny Lind, a small coal mining community east of Fort Smith. These meetings were held in the homes of religiously minded residents. Mr. William Douglas, a ruling elder, who had moved to Jenny Lind from Tennessee, organized a Sunday School and in 1873 a little church was formed with forty members. Mr. J. C. Canada was called to be its pastor. Mr. and Mrs. Sample came out from Fort Smith, sometimes bringing with them by wagon, the little melodeon which Mrs. Sample played. In October of 1885 Washburn Presbytery met at Jenny Lind with Dr. S. W. Davies of Fayetteville as Moderator and Mr. R. G. Bulgin the Commissioner from Fort Smith. Shortly after the meeting of Presbytery, this church was disbanded and the membership transferred to the First Church of Fort Smith.

(These facts were contributed by Mrs. W. T. Yadon, who, with Mr. Yadon, became faithful members of First Church. Mr. Yadon was an Elder.)

When Dr. McKay came to Fort Smith his interest very soon spread from the confines of his own church to a mission work in the lower part of the town where there was much poverty and no places of worship. So in 1893, he called to his assistance Mrs. McKay, Mrs. J. H. McClure and Mrs. H. N. Patten to make a canvass of the First Ward of the city for the purpose of gathering the people into a Sunday School. A little shanty on the corner of Third and Oak Streets was kindly lent by Mrs. W. W. Bailey, an Episcopalian. Dr. McKay had the building made tenable and organized the Mission Sunday School with a membership of fifty-two.

Professor McCollum was elected Superintendent with the following teachers: Mrs. R. A. Clarkson, Mrs. H. N. Patton, Mrs. F. L. Nance, Mrs. J. D. VanWinkle and Miss Una Hall (who later became, with her husband, a missionary to China). Mr. McCollum later left Fort Smith and Mr. VanWinkle took his place for two years, followed by Mr. J. K. Kimmons who served for many years.

The growth of the little school was slow but sure, and the workers had the joy of seeing the little building become crowded and unequal to the school enrollment. Dr. McKay, undaunted by the cry of "hard times," immediately bent his efforts to secure a permanent building which would belong to the school.

Mr. and Mrs. Josiah Foster (grandparents of Miss Virginia Foster) members of First Church, gave a lot on North Third as a memorial to their little son, Logan. Dr. McKay having been successful in raising necessary funds, a small building was erected known as "Logan Foster Chapel." It was dedicated in July 1898. Mr. J. K. Kimmons, Mrs. R. G. Bulgin, Mrs. Fannie Lou Nance, Miss Jessie McKay, Miss Margaret Boles, Miss Dottie Dorente, (Mrs. W. H. Mapes), Miss Mattie Hightower (Mrs. Charles H. Reynolds) and Mrs. Mary Breckenridge Morrison were some of the teachers. Later Mr. E. B. Hempstead became superintendent.

Sabbath School was held every Sunday afternoon, and in the summer Dr. McKay preached every Sunday night and once a month at night the rest of the year. Many lives were influenced for good during these years. The Thanksgiving dinners and Christmas trees and other festivities brought pleasure to the drab lives of the people who were served by these devoted workers. The children were given picnics in the summer as well as wonderful feasts on Thanksgiving and Christmas, to say nothing of a loaded Christmas tree each year furnished by the men and women of the First Church. Among the workers then were Mrs. Bulgin, Mrs. John Smith P., and Mrs. W. J. Johnston, as well as those named above. Miss Fannie McDowell, Mrs. McKay's sister, organized a Saturday afternoon sewing class. The material was furnished by friends and some of the women's organizations. The girls and young women received much benefit from these classes and from contact with the women who gave their services. As the congregation of the little Chapel was made up largely of transient people who worked in the factories for short periods, it was later decided best to discontinue the work, so the Chapel was closed on June 15, 1920, and the property sold.

The second and most far reaching of Dr. McKay's home mission undertaking was the Sulphur Springs Church and Sunday School. About 1908 an evangelist, the Rev. W. H. Ross, had come to Fort Smith and had held prayer meetings in the southern part of the city where a large wagon factory had been built which employed many workers, most of whom lived in that vicinity. Dr. McKay became interested in these meetings and he saw that there was a need for some organized effort for regular religious services, so he established

a Sunday School in a small rented building. His fondest hopes were realized in the interest shown, and the attendance became so large that the Sunday School soon outgrew its quarters, so a new building was proposed.

Once again Dr. McKay set out to raise the funds for this purpose. A lot was purchased at 1920 Towson Avenue, and with contributions of friends, as well as members of the First Church the building became a possibility. Mr. C. E. Speer and Mr. John Witherspoon gave especially generous amounts and Mr. W. P. Graff, who had become very interested, undertook the actual construction of the little church, which was entirely built with free labor given gladly and generously by men living in the vicinity.

Soon a neat little white church stood upon the site, and in 1911 the church was organized with a Session composed of Mr. W. P. Graff, Mr. J. T. Cruese, Mr. W. H. Mackareel and Mr. W. T. Yadon (from the First Church). It became known as the Sulphur Springs Church because of the proximity of a large sulphur spring. Mrs. C. R. Breckenridge, a devoted member of Dr. McKay's congregation, who was quite interested in this undertaking, built a very nice stucco building just below the church, which was used as a meeting place for the families of the Church, for recreation and pleasure. This building she named "The Lees House" for her daughter, Miss Lees Breckenridge.

The Sulphur Springs congregation continued to grow and in 1912 Mr. R. L. Jetton was called as Pastor. He left in 1914 and Mr. Charles W. Ramsey succeeded him. Under succeeding pastorates the church continued to grow until finally the congregation decided that the time had come for a new church in a different location.

Out of this dedicated effort of Dr. McKay's has grown the beautiful Second Presbyterian Church on Jenny Lind Road. The Rev. J. David Simpson served as its minister during the building of the new sanctuary. He ministered to the congregation until he accepted a call for service in Alabama. The Rev. James Mahon is the present pastor.

In 1910 the members of First Church and other friends sent Dr. McKay to Edinburgh, Scotland to the Pan Presbyterian Conference. Dr. McKay loved Scotland, the home of his ancestors and this trip was a highlight in his life.

For several years the church published a weekly bulletin called "The Witness." The following is copied: "Published every Friday by the Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith, Arkansas, Malcolm McNair McKay, Editor, Miss Stuart McCorkle, Reporter, Charlie Warner, Solicitor, Sam Lawrence, Advertiser, Fred Klein, Secretary and Treasurer. Many copies have been preserved and some of the following items are taken from these. They concerned primarily the activities of the older members and especially the women.

A "Silver Tea" in March, 1907 at the home of Major and Mrs. Clifton Breckenridge on North 16th street by the Ladies Aid included the following list of women and young girls assisting: Mrs. Henry Read, Mrs. Charles Eads, Mrs. Fannie Lou Nance and Mrs. S. H. Sherlock, Miss Myrtle Christner, Misses Jessie and Catherine McKay, Miss Agnes Winchester, Mrs. Herschel Hunt, Miss Marie Kimmons.

One of the "monthly parties" held by the ladies of the Presbyterian Church was at the home of Mrs. John H. Rogers on July 20, 1906. These parties are "always thoroughly enjoyed as the hostesses are all known for their hospitality, good programs and delightful refreshments. Those receiving in the front parlor were Mrs. McKay, Mrs. J. K. Kimmons, Mrs. Fred Wenderoth and Mrs. A. W. Irving. In the back parlor were Mrs. Angus McLeod, Mrs. T. J. Wright, Mrs. J. S. McCorkle and Mrs. Roy Johnston. Serving in the dining room were Misses Sarah Beard, Rebecca Read, Mary McKay, Erna and Mamie Wright."

In the fall of 1908 a Harvest Festival was given by the members of the First Presbyterian Church at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Warner. Here assistant hostesses were Mrs. F. J. Klein, Mrs. J. H. Ulmer and Mrs. H. B. Herendeen. The girls serving were Miss Gladys Garrett, Misses Helen and Mildred Yantis, Miss Allison Beard and Miss May Hayes.

A program for Rally Day, Sunday evening, October 6th, 1907, contains the following names of children, some of whom are still members of this Church or in Presbyterian churches in other states: Irene Foster, Salome Eadie, Alice Phillips, Harold Christner, Adele Read, Randolph Sengel, Gladys Albright, Billy Eads, Kate Alexander, Archie McKay, Elizabeth Aubrey, Bertha Lee Ingeberg, Grace Eadie, Louise Wright, Dorothy Read, Miriam Dickens, Sarah Witherspoon, Allison Beard, Martha Decker.

Several receptions were given about 1902 for Mrs. Una Hall Paxton (Mrs. J. W.) who with her husband were returning on furlough from mission work in China. "Miss Ina" as she was affectionately known was a child of this Church and both she and her mother, Mrs. N. H. Patton were much beloved.

Misses Stewart McCorkle and Lynnette Kimmons succeeded as organists Prof. Winkler and Mrs. McNatt.

The church was fortunate in having Mrs. N. I. Garrison as director of the choir during these years. Mrs. Garrison had a lovely soprano voice and was an accomplished musician. The choir was composed of a quartet of beautifully selected voices. Among those who sang in the choir were: Mrs. Frank Singleton, Mrs. Dora Thomason Hoffman, Mrs. D. C. Smith, sopranos; Mrs. B. F. Beckman, Miss Myrtle Keam, Mrs. Fred Johnston, contraltos; Elvin McLeod and Tom Drake, tenors; Roy M. Johnston and Harold Christner, basses.

Although during these years there was no organized youth work as we know it today, there was always of course a flourishing Sunday School, handicapped though it was by the lack of an Educational Building.

When we complain of insufficient room for all the classes and inadequate facilities, perhaps it would make us thankful for what we have, could we look back to some Sunday morning between the years 1900-1920 and see our Sanctuary with all the classes divided into groups, seated in various sections, an earnest teacher standing before each group, striving to keep the attention of his pupils whose interest was at least mildly diverted by the things going on about them. One class of teenage girls sat in the choir loft in the B street side and in the front pews below was a class of teenage boys taught by Judge James F. Read. It is probable that the teacher of the girls, Mr. E. B. Hempstead, long time superintendent of the Sunday School, was quite unaware of the fact that this class was much more interested in the doings of the boys just below them, than they were in the lessons he so conscientiously expounded!

One of the young ladies of the church (Miss Rebecca Read, now Mrs. John Merrick Moore of Little Rock), who taught in the "Infant Department," assisted by Irene Hynes and Letas Aubrey, became so disturbed over the unsatisfactory conditions, that at a party one night she jokingly suggested taking up a contribution to build a little room for her small pupils. Some of the young men met the challenge and before the evening was over the amount had been given! The room was built about where the church parlor now is. Afterwards it was used for an adult class of men and women, taught by Mr. A. L. Peacher, Sr.

Every summer there was a big Sunday School picnic, held for many years at Sans Bois Lake near McCurtain, Oklahoma. Since it involved a short trip on the Fort Smith and Western Railroad (now no longer in existence) it was a very thrilling day for the children at least, and was enjoyed also by many adults.

Of course there were always elaborate Christmas trees, with Santa Claus in the person of Mr. George Sengel who wore a most impressive Santa Claus outfit with much jingling of sleigh bells, distributing gifts for all. There were songs and "recitations" by all the small children. Mr. Ed Haglin trimmed the tree for over twenty-five years, enjoying it as much as the little ones. Also, the older members of this church will always remember the beautiful Easter lilies from his own greenhouse with which Mr. Haglin filled the church on Easter Sunday.

World War I began during the ministry of Dr. McKay. Young men of this Church responded to the call for service in great numbers, but unfortunately no list was kept of those in the service from our church. Many were sent overseas and the rest served in camps in this country. Older men and women did their part in many patriotic services in Bond drives and in Red Cross work, surgical dress-

ings and canteens. Groups met in our church to do Red Cross Sewing during these years. No lists are available and no clippings from the war years. However, the whole church, as well as the entire town was enlisted in the service of our country.

In 1915 Dr. McKay wished to resign his ministry to this church, but the church refused to accede to his request. However, two years later he resigned again and at his insistence his resignation was accepted. Strong men cried when he preached his last sermon, at which time the congregations of the First Methodist and the Central Presbyterian Churches, led by their pastors marched into the church to pay homage to this godly man.

A gift of \$2700.00 was presented to him, \$100 for each of the twenty-seven years of his ministry. Also in one of the stops in the organ was installed, as a memorial to him, an instrument called the vox humana, an imitation of the human voice. The first sermon Dr. McKay preached in this city had as the text "And I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." That was surely the theme of his long ministry in Fort Smith where for twenty-seven years he not only preached Christ but he lived Christ before the whole community.

Dr. McKay died in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1934 and was buried in Eufaula, Alabama. The verse which his widow chose for the stone at his grave reads "Death is swallowed up in victory," a fitting text for this servant of God whose life was indeed a glorious triumph of the spirit over the flesh.

The end of this chapter perhaps marks the end of an era also. In looking back through the years from 1890-1920, one has the very definite feeling that a certain way of life was ending. Many things in the years since have been an improvement, and no one would argue against them, yet to one who has lived in both eras, there was a gentleness and graciousness in the way of life in those days which may contrast a bit favorably with the tension and strain and hurry of life in the 1960's.

CHAPTER 3

In 1917 Dr. William Wirt Harrison, a Virginian by birth, accepted the call to First Church, coming from Memphis, Tennessee, where he had been pastor of the McElmore Presbyterian Church from 1911 to 1917. Mrs. Harrison was a Mississippian by birth. They came to Fort Smith with three children, William Wirt, Jr., Sarah and Emily and occupied the Manse on North 16th and A Streets.

Dr. Harrison was installed as Pastor on January 8, 1918. His influence was soon manifest in all departments of the Church. He had a difficult place to fill following the twenty-seven year pastorate of Dr. McKay, but he and Mrs. Harrison soon became established in the hearts and lives of their congregation. Dr. Harrison was an excellent pastor and quickly became acquainted with his parishoners. He also made many friends outside his own congregation and established a place for himself in the community.

In November 1921 he was instrumental in organizing the Men's Bible Class. Prior to this time, there had been a class of men and women who met in the small frame building in the rear of the Church.

In the records of January 1923, there is a letter from Dr. Harrison expressing a desire to organize a Christian Endeavor Society for the young people of the congregation. A meeting was held January 21st for the purpose of discussing this. There were organized later two Societies, known as the Junior Christian Endeavor, sponsored by Miss Annie Engel and Miss Ruth Campbell, and the Senior Christian Endeavor with Miss Newell Word as sponsor. Thus there began under Dr. Harrison's leadership the first organized work amongst the young people of the Sunday School. Dr. Harrison had an idea for youth work which was ahead of that time, but which was developed in a few years by the General Assembly.

By far the most important undertaking of the early years of Dr. Harrison's ministry was the construction of our present Educational Building. On May 11, 1919, a joint meeting of the Session and Diaconate was called to meet at the Manse for the purpose of securing a lot and devising ways and means of building an addition to the Church to be known as the Educational Building. Elder L. P. Barkdull moved that a committee of two elders and three deacons be appointed to handle the matter. Motion carried. Appointed to the committee were Elders Barkdull and Keister, Deacons H. B. Boyer, J. R. Woods and H. P. Warner.

Apparently the matter was discussed at many meetings of the session and diaconate both separately and jointly. On January 13, 1920, another joint meeting was held at the Manse and two committees were formed to handle the matter of a new Sunday School building, one composed of seven members to be known as the Finance Committee, and the other the Building Committee. The

session and diaconate, in joint session, instructed the trustees of the church, L. P. Barkdull, J. H. Carnahan and H. C. Read, to purchase the Devlin property next to the church at a price not to exceed \$4,500.00 and to borrow enough money to handle the transaction.

There were several congregational meetings called for the purpose of authorizing the Finance Committee and Trustees to borrow sufficient money to pay the difference between the subscriptions and the amount necessary for the building. A financial report for the year 1921 reveals, that the subscriptions totaled \$13,752.00 and the sum borrowed from the bank was \$37,500.00. The final cost of the building was \$47,652.13.

The women worked zealously for this building fund. Mrs. Joe Foster was the treasurer for the women during a period of six years. The women of the church pledged to pay \$12,000 for furnishing the kitchen and dining room. This they did, paying \$2,000 a year for six years. The money was raised by serving dinners to different groups and organizations, by rummage sales and bazaars. They also furnished an office for Dr. Harrison in the basement. Mrs. Will Hendricks had charge of the dining room during this period planning and supervising the meals. Mrs. F. F. Ford was Auxiliary President during part of the time and Mrs. J. R. Woods and Miss Lydia Riley were in charge of the coffee urn.

The women of the Auxiliary raised funds in these various ways, but the most ambitious undertaking was the collection of prized recipes donated by the women of our church and many friends. A committee of capable women of the Auxiliary, headed by Mrs. Charles B. Eads and Mrs. Albert H. Black, worked for many months on this project. "The Dixie Cook Book" was copyrighted and published in 1920 and was an outstanding success. The proceeds from its sale amounting to \$1,000.00 were applied to the building fund for the newly completed Educational Building. A financial report of the Women's Auxiliary for the year 1921 revealed that the Auxiliary paid to the building committee treasurer, J. R. Woods, \$2,079.49 which was used for furnishings and in the year 1922 the Auxiliary paid \$1,500.00 to be used for interest on notes for the Sunday School building.

Unfortunately there are almost no clippings or notes on events which took place during these years, so there is no record of the ceremony marking the laying of the cornerstone of the new Educational Building. The only fact we have is, that it was the same cornerstone laid for the church on 8th and B Streets in 1876. This cornerstone and its contents had been brought up to the site on 12th street and it was laid at the Northwest corner of the new building with the old inscription "Ebenezer" still well marked and the new date of 1920 inscribed.

On June 28, 1925, the resignation of Dr. Harrison was read at a called congregational meeting. In his letter Dr. Harrison stated,

"When I came as your pastor seven years ago I found a church of 220 members and no equipment except the church building. Today we have a strong church of 625 members and one of the most efficient and complete Sunday School plants in the South. If the personal wishes of myself and family alone were to be considered this resignation would not be offered, but I feel that a new man will reach new people and develop new phases of this work. * * * * That God's grace may rest and abide upon you and fill your hearts with a quiet peace of content shall be my daily prayer, and I can only ask that you, in your daily devotions, may remember myself and my family at the Throne of Grace."

At the congregational meeting a committee consisting of W. L. Seamon, E. B. Hempstead, J. S. Miller, Harry P. Warner and Mrs. Dora L. Kimmons was appointed to draft suitable resolutions expressing the appreciation of the congregation for the efficient and faithful services of Dr. Harrison during his ministry here. These were adopted at a congregational meeting on July 12, 1925. In part they read as follows:

"Whereas, under the leadership of Dr. Harrison and as a result of his faithful and untiring ministry in our Church its material welfare has prospered, its spiritual and social life has been stimulated, its membership increased from 220 to 625, and its sphere of influence has been enlarged; and

"Whereas, during Dr. Harrison's administration and with his aid and loyal assistance, we have erected a monument to the Lord in the form of a beautiful, well equipped Sunday School building where we hope and believe the youth of our Church may be faithfully trained in a knowledge of the scriptures and the religion of Christ and the traditions of our forbears;

"Therefore, be it resolved, that we accept with deep regret the resignation of our pastor and extend to him and his family our sincere wish for a continuation of his success in his new field of labor."

Dr. and Mrs. Harrison and their family moved to York, South Carolina where Dr. Harrison assumed the pastorate of the First Presbyterian Church. He died in Greenwood, Mississippi June 9, 1949. Mrs. Harrison died in 1959 in Thayer, Missouri, at the home of her oldest daughter, Sarah, now Mrs. Orren H. Pickard. Wirt Harrison Jr., and his family live in Washington, D. C. Emily is now Mrs. J. Reynolds Carey of Auburn, Alabama.



Rev. William W. Harrison, D.D.
Pastor of First
Presbyterian Church
1917 - 1925



Rev. Frank P. Anderson, D.D.
Pastor of First
Presbyterian Church
1925 - 1932



SULPHUR SPRINGS CHURCH
Built in 1911 - Located on Towson Avenue



Second Presbyterian Church built during ministry of
Rev. J. David Simpson 1951. Located on Jenny Lind Road

CHAPTER IV

In August 1925, the First Church issued a call to the Rev. Frank Pearson Anderson, pastor of the church at Gadsden, Alabama.

Dr. Anderson was born at Westminster, South Carolina, of Presbyterian parents who dedicated him before his birth to the Gospel Ministry if God should call him. He states in a short autobiography that at sixteen years of age he definitely decided to preach the Gospel. After receiving his academic and theological education he spent two years, 1917-1919, as a Chaplain in the Army of Occupation in Europe.

Upon his return to the United States he married Miss Annie Barr of Greenville, South Carolina, and she and their son Frank P. Jr. accompanied Dr. Anderson to Fort Smith in October of 1925 and resided in the Manse. In 1927 a daughter, Ann Shirley was born to them. She is now a missionary to Africa.

When Dr. Anderson arrived, the church had a membership of 625 members, a good Sunday School, a flourishing Woman's Auxiliary, and two Christian Endeavor Societies, the latter formed under the leadership of Dr. Harrison. Dr. Anderson felt in accepting this call, that the outstanding challenge was the possibility of developing the young people's work. The importance of this work was being stressed at this time by the General Assembly and the work of Christian Education was being developed throughout the Presbyterian Church U.S.

Dr. Anderson's first special endeavor was to get a full time director of young people's work on the field, and in this desire he had the ready backing and cooperation of both the Session and Diaconate. The young people, being eager for leadership, responded enthusiastically to the activities planned for them by Miss Emma Dietsch and under her able direction and with Dr. Anderson's interest and untiring efforts, the work of the young people of the church grew and developed in a way that surprised the entire church.

The first record of a young people's choir being formed was the year 1928. Mrs. Roy M. Johnston, an accomplished musician, formed a group of young people of Senior High age, who met for practice in her home and were led by Mr. Johnston whose beautiful baritone enriched our church music for many years. These rehearsals and the fun and fellowship are recalled by many who were then "the young people."

It was at this time that the church throughout the South began to realize what might be accomplished through the organized and planned activities and training of its youth. This had previously been done in a very limited way through the Sunday School. Dr. Anderson, keeping abreast of the changing ideas, grasped the far-reaching importance of this new trend.

Dr. Anderson, with his enthusiasm and personality, became the very center of all the activities of the youth of the church. He was young enough to respond to the enthusiasm of youth, and that, combined with his deep spirituality, gave him an influence with the young people of the congregation which was boundless. There are many mature men and women whose youthful days were spent under his ministry, who will find in these words an echoing response in their own hearts. Many who are active in the work of this church and in other places owe their inspiration to Dr. Anderson.

The scrapbooks of these years are filled with the activities of the youth groups under the direction of Dr. Anderson, Miss Dietsch and her successors, Miss Mamie Gene Cole and Miss Sarah Frances Marshall. Many of these activities will be detailed in another chapter.

About 1929 the now well established Daily Vacation Church School was started in this Church. At that time it was a joint undertaking with the First Methodist and First Christian Churches. From the very beginning the idea was well received. A recorded list of teachers in this first school contains the names of many of the women and young people of the First Presbyterian Church.

The dedication of the new Kilgen pipe organ took place at the morning service Sunday, May 26th, 1929. It replaced the organ which had been in use since the early years of the present sanctuary. The vox humana and the chimes were dedicated at that time, the first being given by the Church as a memorial to Dr. McKay's long years of service. The chimes which we enjoy each Sunday morning were given in memory of Mr. Charles B. Eads by Mrs. Eads.

At this time our church had an outstanding choir with many of the same members who had served so faithfully in the latter years of Dr. McKay's ministry and through Dr. Harrison's pastorate. In 1926 Mrs. Berenice Seeley Logue came into the choir and delighted the congregation with her clear, beautiful soprano voice. She sang continuously in the choir until 1953, the longest period of service ever given by one member.

About 1928 the Men of the Church was organized. In his short autobiography Dr. Anderson wrote as follows: "While this organization never became a phenomenal success during my pastorate, I do feel that it accomplished much for the advancement of the Kingdom and the interest of our men in Christian Service." In following paragraphs he continues—"In the realm of young peoples work, there was a marked upturn in interest. The Sunday School was graded for them and four Christian Endeavor Societies maintained during these last years.

"Throughout these seven years the Women's Auxiliary remained a strong organization doing a most outstanding work. I do not believe there is a better Woman's Auxiliary in the Southern Presbyterian Church.

"During the seven years of my stay there were 485 additions to the Church, 261 by profession of faith and 240 by letter. The total membership of the Church reported to Presbytery increased from 597 to 750."

In June of 1932, Dr. Anderson at a regular meeting of the Session, at the conclusion of business, pulled from his desk a letter of resignation, which shocked the Session into silence. This Dr. Anderson broke by saying that he definitely decided it in January but deferred an announcement thinking it best not to have his resignation pending for months.

The closing paragraph of his resignation is as follows: "These years have been the happiest of my life thus far and there is a deep love in my heart for this Church and its people as I go from them. And as strange as it may seem, I go because I love them and desire their advancement. May God's richest blessing attend them through the years is my prayer."

The feeling of the congregation was well expressed by Elder J. A. Barrett in the message read to the congregation from the Session:

"For the past seven years he has stood facing this congregation every Sabbath Day preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, pointing out to us our opportunities and our possibilities and our failures, yet never harshly and never as a critic. He never tried to build up his congregation by high sounding oratory, for he is no orator, nor did he try to capitalize himself. He was much too consecrated to his work, a work of spiritual life. He never used any high powered method, never any sensational or emotional procedures. But he tried in his ministry to imitate the Son of God as he went from village to village in Judea and Galilee with calm dignity and earnestness of purpose bringing consolation and joy to those who would believe, seeking to save those who were lost. His has been a ministry of peace, joy and brotherly comradeship with nothing to ever mar this tranquility.

"Let none of us be agitated about his successor, but let us pray the blessed Overseer of work to send us another one of His servants as faithful and as consecrated as Frank Anderson with like Christian characteristics."

Dr. Anderson spent the next year in post-graduate study and later held pastorates in several churches in Eastern states, the last one being in St. Petersburg, Florida. In 1958 Dr. Anderson retired from the active ministry and he and Mrs. Anderson are spending several months in leisurely travel. The First Church had the pleasure of a short visit from them in 1958.

CHAPTER 5

On Sunday, September 11, 1932, the Rev. J. W. Hickman, D.D., of Charleston, South Carolina, filled the pulpit of our Church which had been vacant since July 1st. At a congregational meeting following the Sunday morning service, a formal call was extended to Dr. Hickman. This call was accepted and Dr. Hickman preached his first sermon as Pastor on October 16th.

Dr. Hickman was born in Bradley County, Tennessee, April 3, 1887. He graduated from Austin College, Sherman, Texas, and from Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, and Louisville Theological Seminary, in Louisville Kentucky. In June 1913 Dr. Hickman married Miss Lloyd Spindle, a native of Richmond, Virginia. Dr. Hickman was pastor of the historic old Second Presbyterian Church in Charleston, South Carolina, for eleven years. He and his family came to Fort Smith from that city. Three children, William Jr., Virginia, now Mrs. Charles Haynes of Meridian, Mississippi, and Thelma, now Mrs. Dave Speer, of Fort Smith, accompanied their parents to Fort Smith. A third daughter, Mary Elizabeth, was born soon after they came to Fort Smith. She is now Mrs. David C. Thomas of Memphis, Tennessee.

The week following his arrival Dr. Hickman announced that midweek services would be resumed on Wednesday night, October 19th at 7:30 p.m. These services consisted chiefly of Bible studies and were continued for several years. The congregation received great benefit from these Bible lessons which were a great interest of Dr. Hickman's. He was an exceptionally gifted teacher. He had specialized in Bible teaching during all his ministry and had been most successful in building up a keen interest in Bible classes in each of his former pastorates. His efforts here were squally successful, and many members of this Church owe to Dr. Hickman much of the interest in, and knowledge of, the Bible which they possess today.

Various civic and study clubs of Fort Smith soon recognized the ability of Dr. Hickman along these scholarly lines and he became a very much sought after speaker. Clippings preserved in the church scrapbook record accounts of speeches made by Dr. Hickman during these early months of his ministry before many groups, as well as study groups within his own church. His ever recurring theme was "The Bible."

Dr. Hickman's ministry in Fort Smith began at one of the darkest days in the history of this country—the very depths of the "great depression." In those desperate and critical times he realized some very deep truths. His first pastoral letter to his congregation dated February 28, 1933, less than a week before President Roosevelt closed all the Nation's banks, contains the following paragraphs: "We are planning a Church Loyalty Campaign. If there ever was a time when people needed the Church and that which it has to give,

it is in these perilous times when everything on which we are accustomed to rely, has become "sinking sand." "Try religion" is meeting us from statesmen, editors, economists, as well as from the pulpit. Fundamentally, the trouble with the world lies just here—man has been putting his trust in stocks and bonds instead of God. We need to get back to religious foundations. How can the world get back unless as Christians we lead the way? This Church Loyalty Campaign is a move in this direction. We need God and the Church in such times—we all need the Church and the Church needs us."

The Easter season of this year 1933, was marked by a city wide home visitation and religious survey, participated in by 350 workers from the First Presbyterian, First Methodist, First Christian, First Baptist, Immanuel Baptist and Central Presbyterian Churches. This undertaking resulted in much good for the participating churches and the community. At this same season Dr. Hickman conducted a series of pre-Easter sermons, marking the close of the Church Loyalty Campaign. This resulted in many additions to the church and a marked revival of interest.

Before the Easter season of 1934 Dr. Hickman had resolved that the balance due on the organ, installed several years before, must be raised. He set Easter Sunday as the day. Many were very pessimistic about this undertaking when financial conditions everywhere were so black. However the women, as usual, had been working hard for many weeks for this fund and when the offering was made on Easter Sunday it was \$1,043.35, leaving a balance of \$356.65.

The Church budgets for 1933 and 1934 were large for those years—\$14,500 was the quota set both years. In 1933 the budget was undersubscribed by \$2,500 but, the next year was subscribed in full. In 1934 Dr. Hickman instituted "Volunteer Sunday," when members brought their pledge cards to the morning service as an act of worship. A note in the scrapbook records that over \$10,000 of the \$14,500 budget was pledged at that time. The close of the church year, March 31, 1934, revealed a membership of 787, a substantial increase.

Another first, was the innovation of a Vesper Service to replace the traditional 7:30 Evening Service. This proved popular and was continued for many years. Also a Leadership Training School, under the auspices of First Church and First Christian Church, was held in the First Presbyterian Church with Dr. Hickman teaching a class in "New Testament."

For many years the mid week service was a Bible Study Hour. Dr. Hickman also taught a Bible Study class for women one morning a week. Many women of other churches took advantage of this opportunity for Bible study under such a talented and inspiring teacher.

The First Presbyterian Church had the privilege in 1934 of having the Rev. William Crowe, D.D., of St. Louis conduct a week

of special services. Dr. Crowe was a former Moderator of the General Assembly and a very gifted and stimulating speaker.

In the fall of the same year the Rev. Egbert W. Smith, D.D., the well known Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions, spent a week in Fort Smith speaking on "Our Foreign Mission Fields." It is interesting to know that Dr. Smith completed two chapters of a book on which he was working while visiting in the home of members of our church. The book is entitled "What Presbyterians Believe" and is a well known volume on that subject.

Dr. Henry Sweets, outstanding throughout the Presbyterian Church U.S. as an author and minister, came to our Church for a week of preaching in March, 1935. Dr. Sweets book "Planning the Good Life" was being read and studied throughout the church and the Fort Smith church was most fortunate in having him, as well as Dr. Crowe and Dr. Smith.

Union services on Good Friday were held for the first time in Fort Smith church history in April 1935. The service was at the First Methodist Church with seven churches cooperating. Ministers taking part were, the Rev. F. R. Hamilton, Dr. Elbert Hefner, Dr. B. V. Ferguson, the Rev. V. H. Coffman, Dr. J. W. Hickman, Dr. Wallace R. Bacon and Dr. Henderson. This same year Dr. Hickman instituted the custom in our own Church of a Candlelight Communion Service on Maundy Thursday. The lighted cross, used each year in this service was designed and made by Mr. Tom Drake, a deacon and member of the choir. The preparation for this service has been entrusted to two women of the Auxiliary who have served in this capacity for many years. This is perhaps the most solemn and beloved service of the year in our Church. The beautiful wrought iron candelabra used in the windows of the sanctuary at all candlelight services were given by Mr. and Mrs. George H. Williams.

Through the efforts of Dr. Hickman, the noted evangelist, Gypsy Smith, Jr., came to Fort Smith in March 1938 to conduct a two weeks preaching mission in our Church. After the first few nights, our sanctuary could not accommodate half the crowds who came, so arrangements were made to use the Masonic Temple. Every seat was occupied at each service with extra chairs put in every available spot. At the final service the congregation overflowed the auditorium and even the Blue Room, which was equipped with a public address system so that several hundred additional persons could hear the services.

Dr. Hickman reported in a newspaper interview that a majority of the membership of First Church had signed reconsecration cards, and other ministers made similar reports. The purpose of the mission, which was to deepen the spiritual life of church members, had been accomplished. Little emphasis had been placed on enlisting new members. One of the outstanding factors in the mission was the cooperation of other congregations and ministers, especially

noteworthy, since at the pre-Easter season churches have their own special programs.

In 1941 the choir was composed of the following members: Mrs. Berenice Logue, Mrs. Carl Pierce, Mrs. W. W. Klusmeier, Mrs. Guler Worden, Mrs. Roy Vann, Miss Ruth Estes, Mrs. James Wilson, Mrs. W. A. Stackable, Mrs. Buddy Singleton, Mrs. R. A. Gray, Miss Leila McGeath, Neville Kelly, Chris Corbin, Robert T. Weaver, R. J. Vann and David Flinn.

The need for more room and improvements in the Educational Building was felt at this time and in May 1939, the Diaconate decided to take action. Mr. E. C. Nelson, architect, and Mr. Tom Drake, Contractor, were asked to draw up plans for proposed improvements, the same to stay within a \$12,000 limit. Plans were later submitted and approved. In November 1939 the improvements in the Educational Building and the wing, connecting this building with the sanctuary, were completed. These included redecorating and remodeling the Educational Building and the addition of a church parlor, Pastor's study and secretary's office in the connecting wing.

The building committee was composed of the following: Raymond F. Orr and J. Rudolph Woods, Deacons, and J. B. Hobson from the Session. Later the following women were appointed: Mrs. J. R. Woods, Mrs. George Carney and Mrs. T. C. Fleeman.

The usefulness of this addition to our Educational Building soon became apparent since the Fellowship Center with its piano, places for games, and the adjoining kitchen, was used very extensively within the next few years for the recreation and entertainment of the young soldiers who, though unthought of at that time, were so soon to be in our midst.

With the beginning of World War II and the opening of Camp Chaffee, a great responsibility fell upon all the churches of Fort Smith, and the First Presbyterian Church bore its share of the load. With the great numbers of young soldiers coming to our Church, Dr. Hickman led all groups of the church to assume responsibility for making these young and homesick boys feel a warm welcome awaiting them. He kept very close personal contact with the Chaplains at the Camp and the other officers, and followed their suggestions. The Fellowship Center was turned into a lounge and recreation center, with groups of young people, and men and women, spending much time and effort to welcome the young soldiers who turned to the Church for fellowship in their hours in town. Food, fun, and companionship, were available every Sunday afternoon and night and on Saturdays also. The Session authorized the employment of an additional worker to assist the Director of Religious Education in this work, and Dr. and Mrs. Hickman's oldest daughter, Virginia, filled this position very capably for a year. She was succeeded by Mrs. T. C. Fleeman.

The morning service usually found many boys in uniform in the congregation, and they were all taken home for Sunday dinner by the women of the church, many of whom had one or more empty chairs at their own tables. Many mothers found great joy in "mothering" some other woman's son, with the prayer in her heart that her boy might find the same Christian companionship if he were so fortunate as to be still on "this side." Numbers of soldiers shared the pew as well as the hospitality of the same family Sunday after Sunday until they became like one of the family. Many interesting stories could be told of those Sunday afternoons. There were long rides in the family car or sometimes a tired boy would go for a nap to the empty bedroom of the son who was gone. One of the women in our church who had a piano had the good fortune to have as regular guests two soldiers who were musicians, one an accomplished pianist and the other, a lovely baritone voice. What beautiful music they made!

Needless to say there was a flourishing correspondence between these "adopted mothers" and the real ones who were so glad to have news of their sons. Parents coming to visit their sons were also made welcome by the members of our church. In a scrapbook the story is recorded of a card, found one Sunday after the morning services, on which a soldier had written: "May 17, 1942—Sunday dinners fine, Church wonderful—people tops with me. Thanks a million."

One interesting event was a wedding, in our church, of a young soldier who had come regularly to the services here. His fiancée and her parents came from a distant state, and as they had their hearts set on a Church ceremony, Dr. Hickman enlisted the help of some of the women. It was a June wedding. There were many lovely flowers and shrubs in bloom, so the Women's Bible Class arranged a very beautiful setting for the bridal party with white floor baskets filled with flowers, candelabra (lent by a florist) with white candles burning, and the white satin prie-dieu in place. Mrs. Frank Shaeffer, then our organist, played a beautiful program of wedding music and the traditional Lohengrin and Mendelssohn processional and recessional.

One young Presbyterian soldier from North Carolina was a guest each Sunday in the pew and in the home of one of our members. When his host and hostess found out his young wife wanted to come for a visit, an invitation was immediately extended to her, and she and the young husband had a happy reunion in this home.

Such were a few incidents of those tragic war years, when so many homes in our church were saddened by the absence of their sons and husbands. Many services of prayer were held for these young men of our Church who were in the service of their country. God was very good to this Church as only two of the 101 of our young men made the supreme sacrifice while in the service.

Franklin Hynes Jackman was the first member of our Church to give his life in the service of his country. Born in 1918, his mother, Irene Hynes Jackman, was a lifelong member of this Church. She

died in Franklin's early infancy and he was reared by Dr. and Mrs. George Franklin Hynes, and his aunt Miss Mary Hynes. Dr. Hynes was long a ruling elder in First Church and Franklin was reared in this Church of which he became a member when twelve years of age. Franklin chose that valiant branch of the service, the U. S. Coast Guards. He lost his life at sea on February 5, 1944.

Private Paul Lester was the second fatality from the membership of the First Church. He lost his life in an accident while serving at a Camp in California.

Major Maurice Bedwell, Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Bedwell, Sr., an officer in the 6th Armored Infantry, was captured by the enemy in North Africa on February 21, 1943. He spent more than two years in prison camp, suffering hardships past belief. His first imprisonment was in the Concentration Camp at Kassel, Germany, and the second and longer period was at Osslag 64, Poland. When the German General Himler took command of the enemy forces in Poland even the Red Cross food packages, sent to U.S. soldiers imprisoned there, were confiscated.

In January 1944, with the Russians coming close to Poland, the prisoners of war were moved to Germany. On the way Bedwell and two friends managed to hide in a vacant room in a hospital and when the march was resumed they were unwittingly left behind by their German guards. Here the Russians found them and aided them in returning to Poland where they were able to communicate with their families. Finally on March 11, 1945, Major Bedwell escaped to the U. S. Forces and was sent to a port on the Black Sea from which place he was sent, on a hospital ship, to a hospital in North Africa, where he slowly regained his health and the twenty-five or more pounds he had lost. In 1945 he was returned to this country, going first to a camp in Florida, and then to Fort Smith. Until his untimely death in 1958, he gave unceasingly and unsparingly of his time and talents to the beloved church of his boyhood and young manhood, and in the service of his Master.

Major Pierce McKennon son of Mrs. P. D. McKennon and the late Dr. McKennon, Arkansas Ace in World War II, first flew with the Royal Canadian Air Force at a base in England, during the terrifying days of the "Battle of Britain." When the United States formed the Fighter Group of the U.S.A.F. in Britain, Capt. McKennon transferred from the R.A.F. of Britain into the U.S.A.F. After flying numerous missions unharmed, on June 1, 1944, Capt. McKennon's plane was shot down behind the German lines and he was reported "missing in action" until the last of August. During these weeks he fought with the French Maquis, living in caves, in a salt mine and in the attic of a French school teacher. He finally got back to his squadron. The second time he was shot down over occupied France but was able to get to friendly territory. This time he was injured and received the Purple Heart. The third time his plane was shot down near Berlin and one of the other pilots in his squadron landed

his P-51 in the field, packed McKennon in with him in his single seat fighter and returned to their base in England. After the war this was re-enacted in a movie "Fighter Squadron," and in January 1948 Time Magazine ran an article to settle the controversy of whether or not this could have happened.

At the end of European hostilities, McKennon, now a Major, returned to Fort Smith on leave and then was assigned as a Primary Instructor at Randolph Field. Months later, while awaiting an assignment to Hawaii, his training plane with a student pilot at the controls, crashed causing the death of both men. His body was returned to the home of his boyhood, with an escort of P51 fighter planes and officers of the Air Corps.

Dr. Elmer Harper Noel, son of Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Noel, a member of First Presbyterian Church, received his medical degree and his commission as 1st Lieutenant in the Army in June 1941. He served with the 96th Infantry Division in Cornwallis, Oregon, and for a short time at Fort Lewis, Washington. His overseas service was in the Pacific area with the 25th Infantry Division. He was injured in action by shrapnel April 5th in Luzon and then critically injured on May 3, 1945, in Asiatic Pacific theater. Flown back to the United States, he arrived at Kennedy General Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee, on June 3d: being a paraplegic he was hospitalized at Kennedy Veteran's Hospital. Here for four years the young Major fought bravely and uncomplainingly the battle of pain and helplessness, until on June 26, 1949, God called him Home to join that great company of heroes who had made the supreme sacrifice. Major Noel's body now rests in the family mausoleum in Forest Park.

A volume would be required to list the war experiences and the many decorations and medals of honor received by these young men and those on the Honor Roll of this Church which follows. On every theatre of the war the young men named below served bravely and well. On D-Day, June 6, 1944, several of them were in the thick of the Normandy Invasion. Prayer, by groups and individuals, was held in our sanctuary all during the long hours of that terrible day.

Truly this Church can never pay sufficient honor to these brave "soldiers of the cross" who, in defense of their Christian faith, their homes and their country, offered their lives to defend their God-given heritage.

HONOR ROLL

Allen, George W.
 Andrews, John M., Jr.
 Barret, John T.*
 Bedwell, Edward E.*
 Bedwell, Maurice D., Jr. **
 Berry, John C.*
 Bolling, R. L.*
 Broughton, Tom*
 Bulgin, Richard, Jr.
 Carney, George D., Jr.
 Craddock, Gertrude
 Drum, Frank Allen
 Durden, J. W.
 Elliott, Ralph J*
 England, John R.
 England, William P.
 Falls, Gregory
 Foster, Dozier*
 Foster, Miles E., Jr.
 Foster, Robert I.*
 Frederick, Duke, Jr.*
 Frederick, William C.*
 Fuller, Virginia
 Gilchrist, Robert
 Gould, J. W.*
 Greenlee, Karl
 Grigsby, Frank M.
 Grigsby, Leon
 Hatcher, Phil*
 Haynes, Charles A.
 Hayes, Donald S.
 Hill, Gerald E.*
 Hill, J. W. Birse
 Hobson, Laurence B.
 Hornberger, E. Z.*
 Howard, L. King*
 Hunt, Fred S.
 Hunt, William S.*
 Hurt, Thomas H.*
 Ivey, Roy Donathon
 Jackman, Franklin Hynes****
 Jackson, Harper S.
 Jackson, Robert H.
 Jenkins, Jim N.*
 Kimpel, Ben Drew*
 Klusmeier, William W., Jr.

Lester, Paul****
 Lambiotte, Albert S.
 Lucier, James A.
 Manley, Eugene H.*
 Mapes, William H.
 McGraw, George W., Jr.
 McClendon, A. Thornton
 McKennon, Parma D., Jr.*
 McKennon, Pierce W.****
 Moorman, Jesse
 Moulton, Everett C., Jr.*
 Murta, Ward Evans
 Noe, Thomas E.
 Noel, Elmer Harper****
 Pierce, James C.
 Powell, James Webb, Jr.
 Read, Henry C., Jr.
 Rhodes, Charles L.
 Rhodes, Robert M.
 Richardson, John Gordon
 Robinson, Lusk*
 Scott, Tom J., Jr.*
 Sengel, Harry*
 Sengel, Howard
 Sengel, William R.
 Smart, Tom D.*
 Speer, Dave H.
 Stackable, James C.*
 Still, Douglas M.
 Thompson, Marshall P.*
 Turner, Louis***
 Turner, Robert
 Waddy, David S.*
 Waite, Robert F.
 Warner, Charles E.
 Weaver, William
 Webster, Henry M.*
 Wenderoth, Collier, Jr.*
 Wernye, Fred*
 Wheeler, Charles B.
 Whitmer, Lee R.*
 Willard, Karl Porter
 Williams, Jack B.*
 Wood, Curtis L.
 Word, Robert H.*
 Wortz, Carl III*

*In Foreign Service

**Prisoner of War

***Missing in Action

****Deceased

August 15, 1945, found all churches open and hundreds kneeling or sitting quietly in pews at the Victory Day Thanksgiving Services. In each heart there was also a silent remembrance of those who had made the supreme sacrifice.

In the Korean War which followed so soon, this Church joined their families in mourning the death of two young men, Capt. Will Hughes Gordon and Lieutenant Charles Eads Coons.

Capt. Gordon, son of Col. and Mrs. W. H. Gordon, Sr., (U.S. Army retired), was born in 1924 at Fort Benning, Georgia. He joined the Army in 1942 and served in the China, Burma, India theatre and the European Theatre of Operations in World War II. He came to Fort Chaffee in 1950. On June 2, 1951, he was married to Carolyn Crane, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Davis Crane. Before leaving for Korea he became a member of this church. Capt. Gordon's body was returned to Fort Smith, the home of his young wife and daughter in October 1952, here to rest in "honored glory" until the Resurrection Day.

Lieutenant Charles Eads Coons was the son of Mrs. Frances Eads Coons and the grandson of Mr. and Mrs. Charles B. Eads, long time members of this church. After receiving his commission as Lieutenant in the U. S. Army, he was sent very soon to Korea. He also gave his life on the Korean battlefields. His body was returned to Fort Smith and rests in the National Cemetery beside the grave of his great grandfather, Major Thomas H. Barnes, a Union officer in the War Between the States.

The following lines, written by Dr. Daniel A. Poling, a well known Baptist Minister, upon the death of his Chaplain son at sea, seem very appropriate as we think of the untimely ending of these young lives:

"They kept their rendezvous with death
So valiantly and soon,
They pledged their youth and gave their all
And rest before their noon.

But God will give them better things
And keep them by His side,
And they shall have new worlds to build
Where death, itself, has died"

This seems an appropriate place to record the facts concerning two of the young men of this church who have entered the Ministry and whose lives have been dedicated to the service of the Master. The first young man to do this was Allen Scott, son of W. S. and Sarah Scott who were members of this church during the early years of Dr. McKay's pastorate. Their son, Allan, was a graduate of Davidson College and served for several years as the pastor of the Sulphur Springs Church. He later moved to Texas and served as supply for several Texas churches while living in Dallas. He is now retired and is living in Kansas.

William Randolph Sengel, son of Randolph Sengel, an elder in this church and a descendant of one of the earliest families on the church rolls, became interested in the ministry during Dr. Hickman's pastorate and under the influence of one of the Directors of Christian Education, Miss Leila McGrath. After graduating from High School and Junior College he entered Davidson College, but left after his second year for officer training in the U. S. Navy. After two years service, he graduated from Davidson and then chose Yale for his Seminary training. In 1949 he graduated with his Bachelor of Divinity degree, cum laude, and was awarded the Walcott Calkins prize for his work.

After a pastorate of three years in Radford, Virginia, he was then called to the First Presbyterian Church in Fulton, Missouri, where he also taught Bible at Westminster College which awarded him his D.D. degree in May 1959. He frequently has filled the pulpit of our church where his old friends share his family's pride in his consecrated and successful ministry. At present he has accepted a call to the pastorate of the historic Old Meeting House in Alexandria, Virginia.

Returning to some of the things accomplished after the period of World War II, we find the outstanding project undertaken during the years from 1947 to 1950, was the establishment of the Hobson Kindergarten. This was first brought up at a Session meeting in 1947, and, as it was a very novel undertaking, it caused much discussion. The Session saw the possibilities, but there were many problems to consider—finances, building and equipment and a qualified teacher or teachers. The Religious Education Committee was given the responsibility of investigating ways and means. This committee was supplemented by a Planning Committee with Chris D. Corbin as chairman, Mrs. Rudolph Woods, Mrs. Stanley Hays, Mrs. J. B. Hobson, Mr. J. B. Hobson, Mr. W. A. Stackable, Mr. C. W. Dameron and Mr. R. M. Steele.

On April 4th 1947, the Session voted approval of the undertaking and the committee named above met again to work out the final details. Mrs. V. V. Fletcher was engaged as Director-Teacher and Mrs. Russell Northup as assistant. The second year Mrs. Chris Corbin became the Director-Teacher, with Mrs. Northup as her assistant. Following the death of Elder J. B. Hobson, the name was changed to "Hobson Kindergarten" as a memorial to Mr. Hobson, and in appreciation of the important role he and Mrs. Hobson had played in the inspiration, planning and execution of this important project. Mrs. Hobson has acted as Dean of the Kindergarten for several years.

On September 15, 1952, the kindergarten opened with thirty-six pupils. The limit has always been forty pupils. The furnishings and equipment for the kindergarten were all donated anonymously, which helped to make the school self supporting the first year, as it has been ever since. The school has had the limit of forty pupils enrolled each year with a waiting list. This was the first church kinder-

garten in Fort Smith except at parochial schools, and our church feels a justifiable pride in having pioneered in a new field. Most of the larger churches in Fort Smith now have their own church kindergartens.

Spiritual emphasis is placed first in the training of the children and while no denominational lines have ever been drawn, one small boy must have sensed the Presbyterian background, since his reply to the question "Who was George Washington," quickly replied, "He was the first Presbyterian"!

During the years of 1949, 1950 and 1951, the records show that the Session of this church helped substantially in a material way with the building of the new Second Presbyterian Church. The deeds to the old Towson Avenue property, formerly known as the Sulphur Springs Church, which were held by the First Church were transferred to the Second Church by the Trustees of this Church and the proceeds from the sale of this property, together with the \$2,000.00 included annually, for several years in the budget of the First Church, to be given to the building fund of the Second Church, were of great help in their building project. Consequently, it is with great joy that we see the beautiful stone church on Jenny Lind Road. We are even happier when we realize the remarkable growth which that congregation has enjoyed under the pastorates of the Rev. J. David Simpson and the present pastor, the Rev. James Mahon.

Several of the treasured possessions of this church were given during the last few years of Dr. Hickman's pastorate. The handsome pulpit which was made to match the paneling behind the rostrum, in wood, finishing and carving, was given by Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Wortz, Jr., as a gift from the Wortz family. This has contributed very much to the dignity and elegance of the sanctuary. The pair of pedestals upon which the memorial flowers are placed each Sunday were a gift from Mr. Homer J. Conley, a long time deacon of this church, now deceased, in memory of his parents. These, like the pulpit, were especially designed to match the paneling. The baptismal fount was given in memory of Mrs. Mahlon Henley by the firm with which her son, Foster Henley, a former member of this church, was connected. The Bible marker for the pulpit Bible was given by Mrs. P. D. McKennon in memory of her son, Major Pierce McKennon. Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Eads, Sr., gave a portable communion service as a memorial gift.

Another gift which has added to the comfort and beauty of the sanctuary, are the green velvet cushions in the pews. These were a gift from Tom A. and R. B. Cutting and other members of the congregation. A pair of silver vases was a gift to the church from Mrs. A. H. Morrow. In 1959 a lovely cabinet was given by Mrs. Morrow, in which are kept these vases, the original communion vessels of this church and a silver baptismal bowl presented to the church in 1930 by Elder E. B. Hempstead. There is also a silver plate given by a group of friends in memory of Mrs. John M. Andrews, Jr. The

hymnals which have been used in our worship services were given by Mrs. Tom Drake in memory of her husband. This was an eminently suitable memorial, as Mr. Drake's beautiful tenor voice enriched the music of the choir for twenty-three years. Mr. Drake was a deacon and later an elder in our church until his death.

The family of Mr. W. T. Yadon, for many years a consecrated Elder of First Church, gave the beautiful brass cross and vases which contribute so much to the beauty of our sanctuary. The hand turned walnut collection plates which each Sunday receive the tithes and offerings of the congregation, were given in memory of their daughter, Cynthia, by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Armstrong. The loving devotion to their church which prompted these donors will make their gifts always precious to the members of this Church.

In 1946 the Session authorized the calling of the Rev. D. A. Bowles to be the associate pastor and Director of Religious Education. Mr. and Mrs. Bowles arrived in April 1946 and remained until September 1947. When they left in 1947 Miss Virginia Smith was called to be the new Director of Religious Education. She became seriously ill after about two years here, and in 1950 returned to her home in the East where she died a few months later.

An Outpost Sunday School was started in May 1948 at the Heartsill Ragon Courts by two boys of our Sunday School, Jimmy Andrews and David Hays. It was well attended for a few months but because the population of the Courts was too shifting, it was decided it was not a practical undertaking. It was discontinued in September.

In 1948 the question of a new Manse was brought before a joint meeting of the Session and Diaconate. Lots had been bought some time before this in the 900 block on South 25th Street. This action was ratified by a congregational meeting which also authorized the sale of the old Manse on North 16th and A Streets by the Trustees of the church. Approximately \$10,000 was realized from this sale and in the fall of 1949 the new Manse at 915 South 25th Street was completed at a cost of \$34,000. The building committee was: Randolph Sengel, Chairman; E. Chester Nelson, J. H. Carnahan, A. Y. Berry, Frank Beckman, Maurice Bedwell, Sr., Mrs. Collier Wenderoth, Sr., Mrs. Harry Warner. Plans were approved October 1948.

Early in 1951, the Session approached the matter of trying to secure an Assistant Pastor to replace Miss Virginia Smith. The Session's committee on nominations worked diligently but were unable to secure an acceptable young man at the salary which the church could afford.

On May 1st, 1951, Dr. Hickman presented to the Session his letter of resignation, to take effect not later than April 1952. He stated that since an Associate Pastor was out of the question, it was his considered judgment, that for the good of this church and its future, a new voice and a new leader should be heard and followed. Dr.

Hickman's letter was received with real regret by the Session, and resolutions were passed expressing the appreciation of the Session and the congregation for Dr. Hickman's nineteen years of faithful, consecrated and efficient service to this Church.

A congregational meeting was called for December 30th to act upon the motion to request Washburn Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relationship between Dr. Hickman and the First Presbyterian Church. It was necessary that the congregation appoint a committee to nominate a Minister to succeed Dr. Hickman. The committee elected consisted of the Sessions Committee on Nominations: Harry P. Warner, Chairman; Raymond Orr, J. B. Hobson, Collier Wenderoth, Sr., Chris D. Corbin and A. Y. Berry, Sr. To this committee was added an advisory group with members from the Diaconate, the Women of the Church, the Church School and Young Adults.

On Sunday, January 29, 1952, Dr. Hickman preached his final sermon to an overflowing congregation, many of whom were visitors from other churches, who came to pay tribute to a Minister who had influenced the lives of many individuals outside his own congregation, and whose efforts had reached out into the whole community. Many of his own flock had moist eyes as they listened for the last time to the one who had so faithfully preached the Word of God, and who had shared their joys and brought comfort in times of sorrow for almost twenty years.

The following week Dr. and Mrs. Hickman left for their new home in Demopolis, Alabama, with the prayers and good wishes of the First Presbyterian Church following them and their family.



Dr. J. W. Hickman
Pastor of First
Presbyterian Church
1932 - 1952



Rev. James E. Fogartie
Pastor of First
Presbyterian Church
1952 - 1955

CHAPTER 6

James E. Fogartie was born at Brookhaven, Mississippi, June 20, 1924. His father and grandfather were both ministers of the Presbyterian Church U. S. and so it was natural for the younger man to feel the call to follow in their footsteps. After graduating from the University of Texas he entered Austin Theological Seminary where he received his B.D. degree in 1948. He also received his M.A. at the University of Texas.

He became pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Marianna, Arkansas, in June 1948 and served until March of 1952, when he accepted the call to this Church. He was minister here until November 1955. He was given a leave of absence by this Church during the summer of 1952 to serve as supply minister of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Wembly London, England.

He married Ruth Ann Douglass of Sherman, Texas in 1946, and Ann Douglass Fogartie and Elizabeth Vance Fogartie were born during Mr. and Mrs. Fogartie's residence in Marianna. During their stay in Fort Smith their two sons were born: Arthur Ford Fogartie and James Eugene Fogartie, Jr.

At a called meeting of the First Church February 17, 1952, the report of the Sessions Committee and the Advisory Committee appointed for the selection of a successor to Dr. Hickman, was heard. This committee reported their unanimous choice to be the Rev. James E. Fogartie, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Marianna, Arkansas. The committee recommended that a call be issued subject to the approval of Presbytery's committee which was contained in a letter from Chairman Wardlow and read by the Moderator. Upon motion of Chairman Harry P. Warner, it was proposed and seconded and was carried by unanimous vote of the congregation.

The Rev. James E. Fogartie met with the Session February 19th and in accepting the call made the following statement: "Mrs. Fogartie and I have prayerfully considered your call and in all humility we believe we have been led to accept it. In doing this my interest is to reach men for Christ. Naturally I can't do this work alone but together we can do it with God's help."

Mr. Fogartie occupied this pulpit for his first service on Sunday morning March 23d, 1952. The Easter season was at hand and Mr. Fogartie led the congregation in beautiful pre-Easter services. During Holy Week he conducted services each night preceding the solemn Candlelight Communion Service of Maundy Thursday. Good Friday there were three hour services in our sanctuary, with the ministers of six other churches participating in meditations on the Seven Words from the Cross. Easter Sunday Mr. Fogartie began something that was new to our Church—the custom of two services, one at 8:45 A.M., and one at 11:00 A.M. Before many months, under the inspiration of a new leader, the church attendance increased to an extent which made this a necessity, and the plan has been followed since.

Records available for this period reveal that Mr. Fogartie's interests were threefold: first, to draw into the church those whose interests had lagged; second, those not affiliated with any church, and last, but by no means least, the work of the young people. For this last work he was particularly gifted by his magnetic personality, his musical talent, and the fact that he had an appeal to youth. The young peoples work reached an all time high during the first two years of Mr. Fogartie's ministry. Two young adult classes were formed, the Westminster, for returned college students and the Chart'n Compass class sponsored by Mrs. Fogartie.

Youth choirs begun years ago in this church were revived and became a lovely part of the services. A large volunteer choir, with a paid director, replaced the choirs in existence heretofore.

Mr. and Mrs. Fogartie spent the months of July and August, 1952, in London, England. Upon their arrival at the Manse of St. Andrews they found a huge box of lovely linens which the Women of the Church had sent. These were a gift of friendship to Mrs. Sutherland and an appreciation of their courtesy to the Fogarties.

The pastor was much handicapped by lack of a Director of Religious Education throughout the year 1952, but March 31, 1953, Miss Helen Ballew of Pine Bluff arrived to assume her duties and the work of the young people progressed very rapidly.

The pre-Easter season of 1953 was given a special significance by a preaching mission conducted by Dean James I. McCord, dean of Austin Seminary, which began on March 30th and lasted through Good Friday, April 3d. Breakfast meetings, at which Dean McCord spoke to the men, were held at 7:00 A.M. each day. At 10:00 A.M. the same lectures were given to the Women of the Church. Services each night, Maundy Thursday Candlelight Communion and the three hour Good Friday services made this another season long to be remembered.

One of the noteworthy things which Mr. Fogartie did early in his ministry was to re-establish the midweek meeting on Wednesday night in the Fellowship Center. The hour was led by the pastor in informal discussions and studies of various subjects; also Bible studies and Presbyterian beliefs. One course which was outstanding was on "The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ."

Mr. Fogartie's unusual qualities as a leader, his interest in civic affairs, and his outstanding ability as a speaker soon became known and he was consequently in great demand. He became interested in all worthwhile civic projects and served on numerous boards and committees. This resulted in bringing many people into the membership of the First Church and increasing the interest of long time members. The membership of our Church was quite gratified with his selection by the Junior Chamber of Commerce in February 1954, as Fort Smith's outstanding young man of 1953. His activities were listed as being a member of the Ministerial Alliance, the Board of

the U. S. O., the Boys Club and Girls Club, Federated Welfare, American Red Cross and Junior College. As a worker for these organizations and as a member of the Rotary and Noon Civics Clubs, his Christian leadership extended beyond the bounds of his own congregation.

An outstanding achievement of 1953 was the installing of a complete new heating and air conditioning system for the sanctuary, the women's parlor, the pastor's study and the church office. A committee headed by Deacon Collier Wenderoth, Jr., had been appointed by the Session in July 1951 to investigate this matter fully and for two years this committee gave many hours of intensive research on this matter. The result of their work has been enjoyed since then in the splendid functioning of the heating and air conditioning units. The cost was approximately \$13,000.00 of which \$10,000.00 was borrowed by the trustees and the remainder came from voluntary contributions.

Turning from the very material to the spiritual, there is one thing which perhaps will remain longer in the hearts of the members of this Church than any other connected with the ministry of James Fogartie, and that is the fifteen minute period each Saturday morning at 8:15 over radio station KFPW during which Mr. Fogartie brought a gospel message of faith, hope, encouragement, and cheer. The message came on the air with a choir singing the first verse of "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty," then the message, always different, but always deeply spiritual, delivered in the Minister's beautiful speaking voice was followed by a prayer, and closed with the choir singing again the majestic words of the old hymn. It is safe to assert that this was enjoyed weekly by most Presbyterians as well as hundreds of others.

In December of 1954 Mr. Fogartie preached a most unusual sermon entitled "Bedlam or Bethlehem?" The members of the First Church were so impressed with it that the Session ordered the printing of a number of copies. It was also published in the local papers.

At the Christmas Season of 1952, and again for two years, the Church School with the help of the young adult classes and other interested persons, produced on the church lawn a beautiful Nativity Pageant. This was so artistically and realistically done that it drew the attention of hundreds of people, and during the hour of the production for three nights before Christmas hundreds of people in cars and on foot jammed the block in front of the church.

The First Presbyterian Church was grateful for the opportunity of contributing its share to the community observance of the Christmas Season, in a manner suitable to the birth of the Christ Child. Through the kindness and generosity of a deacon in this Church, Fort Smith citizens have enjoyed for over thirty-five years a city wide caroling from a carillon attached to the car of Mr. C. H. Wortz, Jr., from the early hours of Christmas Eve until the wee small hours of Christmas morning. The age old and beloved Christmas Carols

have brought happiness to the sick in hospitals, the County Home and the Shut-ins, as well as to residents in all parts of the city.

The First Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith feels very grateful that in addition to the young men reported in a previous chapter as having entered the ministry, the Rev. Allen Scott and Dr. William Sengel, there have been two others who have dedicated their lives to full time Christian service—James E. Andrews, son of Mr. and Mrs. B. M. Andrews, and Tom Cutting, Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Cutting, Sr. James Andrews graduated from Austin College and Austin Seminary under the sponsorship of the Session of the First Church and Washburn Presbytery. Because of his outstanding record at the Seminary and through the efforts of Dean James I. McCord, he was appointed Jubilee Secretary for the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland.

Tom Cutting, Jr., graduated in June 1959 from Davidson College, and the following autumn entered Princeton Theological Seminary to begin his training for the Ministry. Both James Andrews and Tom Cutting, Jr. have on several occasions filled the pulpit of their home church to the joy and pride of their friends.

With the resignation of Mrs. Charles Jernigan (the former Helen Ballew) as Director of Religious Education, Mr. Fogartie was again faced with the almost impossible task of securing a successor. At a Session meeting April 13, 1954, the committee on staff organization recommended the employment of a man as a lay assistant, with the title of Director of Church Activities. The position would combine the work of Director of Religious Education with certain administrative functions as assistant to the pastor. This plan had been tried in other churches. The Session directed the committee to proceed with the employment of such a man, and take the time to find a properly qualified person. Fortunately this person was found sooner than hoped for, and May 4, 1954, the Session unanimously voted to offer the position to Mr. King Howard. Because of the great interest he had developed in the work of the church and young people during his service as a deacon and in young people's work, Mr. Howard felt called to accept this challenge for full time Christian service. He was sent to Richmond, Virginia, for a period of training and later in the summer he was commissioned at a morning worship service. During the remainder of Mr. Fogartie's pastorate he received untold help from King Howard in work with the young people and the countless details developing upon a minister in a church of this size. His value to the church was proved later, during the ten months when, the Church being without a leader, King Howard capably and faithfully kept up with every detail and carried on his shoulders a burden which probably few people realized. The Church will always owe him a debt of gratitude for his efficient and faithful service during a trying period.

One very important work was undertaken by a group of the officers of the church—the forming of the St. Andrews Club, primarily

an evangelistic effort. The Club met regularly once a week and with a list of "prospects" for membership the members went out in groups of twos to call upon those whose names were given them. Many were newcomers to Fort Smith and the warmth of the welcome given to them was much appreciated, as the rapid growth of the church membership evidenced. Elder John M. Danner was a leader in the founding of the organization and in its work. Upon his untimely death in 1955 it was voted to call it the John Danner Chapter of the St. Andrews Club.

Soon after Mr. Fogartie's arrival, he, as well as the Session and Diaconate, realized how very inadequate were the facilities of our Educational Building. Since 1920, when it was built, the membership of the Church and Sunday School had increased greatly and there was a crying need for more classroom space and a choir room, as well as a room for the Men's Bible Class. The records reveal that this was the subject of much earnest discussion in meetings of the officers. The small frame building adjoining the church property to the South had been bought previously and was remodeled for the Hobson Kindergarten. Also the corner lot and house had been bought by the church and was converted into a department for the nursery of the Sunday School. About this time the two story brick hotel directly North of the sanctuary across B Street became available for our church to purchase and it was investigated by numerous committees from the Session, Diaconate and Women of the Church. After much discussion it was decided that it would be more practical to remodel the present educational building and add to it annexing the property purchased from Mr. and Mrs. Ed King. The following committee had been nominated by the Session and elected at a congregational meeting April 17, 1955; Thomas A. Cutting, Raymond F. Orr, George H. Williams, Collier Wenderoth, Jr., Ned G. Becker, Basil M. Moody and W. S. Sampson.

Some beautiful gifts were received by the Church in the years 1953-1955. A portable communion set was received in memory of Elder Mahlon Henley, also an anonymous gift of six sterling silver communion plates and a silver baptismal bowl, handwrought by a silversmith at Tiffany's. The officers and congregation were deeply grateful for these gifts. Another gift is the handsome damask and lace cloth which covers the communion table when the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is observed. This came from Italy where the lace was especially woven with a design of the Cross and the Crown. It was sent to this Church by Captain and Mrs. Sam Black of Spartanburg, South Carolina, and Colonel and Mrs. Robert Bates, all of whom were members of this Church during their assignment to Fort Chaffee. When they were sent to a European assignment in Germany the two couples made a trip to Italy and had this cloth especially made in Milan, sending it to this Church to express their appreciation of the Christian fellowship they had found here.

At a routine meeting of the Session July 5, 1955, after regular business had been transacted, Mr. Forgartie shocked the Session

by the announcement that two months previously he had been approached by a committee from a church in Charlotte, North Carolina, which was to vote at a congregational meeting the following Sunday on the matter of extending a call to Mr. Fogartie. This announcement was received by the Session in shocked silence, which was quickly followed by their expressions of congratulations and sincere good wishes for the future, as well as expressions of appreciation for the great good accomplished by the minister during his brief pastorate.

Mr. Fogartie announced his resignation to our congregation at the close of the second service July 10th. The following evening, Monday, July 11th, the Session met again to consider the necessary steps to be taken. It was decided that a congregational meeting would be called July 24th for the purpose of concurring with Mr. Fogartie's request to Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relationship, as of November 1, 1955, and to elect a pulpit nominating committee. The Session appointed Raymond Orr, A. Y. Berry and Harry P. Warner to nominate seven other people, this committee to be voted on at the congregational meeting. At a subsequent meeting of the Session, Chairman Orr submitted these additional names: Chris D. Corbin, Collier Wenderoth, Jr., Dr. Harley Darnell, Dr. E. Z. Hornberger, W. S. Sampson, Mrs. T. C. Fleeman, and Mrs. W. E. Knight. This list was approved for nomination to the congregational meeting of July 24th, which agreed to Mr. Fogartie's request and voted favorably on the names submitted for the Pulpit Nominating Committee.

There was in the church bulletin of October 30, 1955, Mr. Fogartie's final word to his people as their Minister. This was a message of love for the many friends he was leaving, sadness at parting, and a challenge to the Church to continue a prayerful search for a new pastor and to remain loyal and faithful to the task ahead.

Mr. and Mrs. Fogartie and their children left the following Tuesday for Charlotte, North Carolina, with the prayers of the congregation that God's richest blessings would abide with them in the years to come.

CHAPTER 7

AD INTERIM

November 1, 1955 - September 3, 1956

The Session determined at its first meeting after Mr. Fogartie's departure that church services and all church activities would go forward, as nearly as possible, in the same manner as before. Prior to his leaving, Mr. Fogartie had contacted Austin Seminary to aid the Session in supplying ministers for each Sunday. At the Session meeting of November 8th, King Howard stated that, with one or two exceptions, pulpit supply had been arranged up to Christmas.

The matter of buying property in the north or east part of the city, with the idea of establishing a new church, was again brought before the Session. A fund had been established several years before to start an Out-Post Sunday School. Also Mr. Hal Hyde, Secretary of the Urban Church Department of Assembly's Church Extension Committee, had made a very thorough survey of possible locations. Some of his suggestions had been followed through, but none of the locations suggested were available and the matter was temporarily dropped.

The pulpit nominating committee at many Session meetings, and to the congregation, reported that they were proceeding very deliberately and prayerfully in order to secure the right man as pastor of our Church. Many names had been submitted and each one would be contacted, a matter involving much time and many trips.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that during these trying ten months, the loyalty of the congregation and its officers never wavered, and attendance at worship services was remarkably good. The Church was extremely fortunate in having so many of Austin Seminary's faculty to fill our pulpit, as well as others from the Synod of Arkansas. Also Fort Chaffee's Chaplains were very kind in filling our pulpit. Mr. James E. Andrews, sponsored by this Session and Washburn Presbytery, and a senior student at Austin Seminary, filled the pulpit one Sunday, as did John Eadie and Tom Cutting, Jr., both candidates for the ministry.

Several ministers of other local churches were extremely kind in ministering to the congregation of this Church in times of need when serious illness or bereavement made a man of God so necessary. Their kindness will never be forgotten and the thanks of the congregation were extended to these ministers, Dr. Roebuck of the First Methodist and Dr. Stone and the late Dr. Elbert Hefner of the Central Presbyterian Church.

Finally the committee on pulpit nominations reported that it was ready to place the name of a minister in nomination to the Session and to the congregation. Consequently a joint meeting of the Session and Diaconate was called for May 24, 1956.

Chairman Orr submitted the report, several paragraphs of which are quoted: "Since its election your committee has traveled approximately 42,670 miles, has made 49 different trips, spent 97 individual days in travel, has heard 18 different men and has considered information and data on very many more. The committee has held 30 meetings, spending countless hours in these meetings, in addition to time spent as individuals. The total expenditures of the committee were around \$1,600.00."

Mr. Orr said that the committee was conscious from the beginning that perhaps they set their standards too high for the many qualities and qualifications they sought in the man they would nominate to the congregation, yet, through it all, they continually sought the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

He also added the sobering thought that if the committee was unduly proud of its own church when they started, this attitude was definitely changed now, for in their travels they had found many other churches accomplishing more for the Lord.

Mr. Orr stated that the committee had now found a minister whom they wished to nominate to the congregation. This man, Dr. Thomas Burke Gallaher, is the minister of the First Presbyterian Church of Waco, Texas. His father and grandfather before him were and are ministers of the Gospel in Presbyterian Churches U.S. Dr. Gallaher is now fifty-one years of age. He was married in 1937 in Raleigh, North Carolina, to Miss Alma Loudermilk who was Director of Religious Education in a Presbyterian Church in Raleigh. They have two children, Sally now 16 years of age and Tom, Jr., 12 years. Dr. Gallaher is a native of Texas and received his B.A. degree from Austin College, his B.D. from Austin Seminary in 1929, and has done his graduate work at the University of Texas. For two years he was Regional Director of Religious Education for the Synods of Texas and Oklahoma. He is Chairman of "Mo-Ranch" a conference and retreat area of 5000 acres valued at \$500,000.00 and owned and operated by the Synod of Texas.

During his pastorate at First Church of Waco the congregation has grown to over 1000 members and the budget increased from \$16,000 to \$73,000.

In every respect the committee feels that he meets the high standard of qualifications that the committee has consistently held from its inception. He is keenly interested in the work of the Sunday School and in the leadership of the young people. He is an excellent preacher, and the duties of the pastoral office are perhaps his greatest interest. He is a successful administrator of his church's affairs, an able leader of men, and good in community relationships.

At the close of Mr. Orr's report each member of the committee had further comments and endorsements to add. Perhaps the thing most stressed was Dr. Gallaher's great interest in the relationship between pastor and people, and his keen interest in each individual member of his congregation. It was felt that this was a great need in this Church.

The Session and Diaconate immediately endorsed the nomination of Dr. Gallaher to be presented at a congregational meeting called for June 3, 1956. The report of the Pulpit Nominating Committee was presented to the congregational meeting practically as given above at the session meeting. The call to Dr. Gallaher signed by each member of the committee was then read by Mr. Orr and the name of Dr. Thomas B. Gallaher was placed in nomination. A standing vote of the congregation was unanimous and the Moderator of the meeting, Norman J. Dow of Austin Seminary, declared that the call had been made in all respects according to the Book of Church Order.

The moderator then suggested that the congregation discharge the Pulpit Nominating Committee, and in recognition of their long, diligent and faithful service the congregation should give them a rising vote of thanks and appreciation, which was done.

Before closing the meeting the Moderator stated that he had known Dr. and Mrs. Gallaher well, and that from the bottom of his heart he congratulated the First Presbyterian Church upon its selection of a new minister. He said he knew everything the committee had reported to be true, and he ended "When a church gets Tom Gallaher for its minister—with Alma thrown in—there is nothing left to be desired"!

At a meeting of the Session July 3, 1956 it was stated that Dr. Gallaher had advised that the congregation of the Waco Church had declined to join him in his request to Central Presbytery of Texas that the pastoral relation be dissolved. Central Presbytery of Texas was to meet some time in July in Dallas to act upon the matter. The Moderator of the Session thereupon appointed Elders Raymond Orr, A. Y. Berry, Chris D. Corbin and Deacon W. S. Sampson as commissioners to prosecute the call of this church before Central Presbytery.

The appointed commissioners met with Central Presbytery of Texas in Dallas at 3:00 P.M. on July 17th at the First Presbyterian Church. July 22d, at a meeting of the Session, the commissioners reported that the pastoral relation between Dr. Gallaher and the First Presbyterian Church of Waco had been dissolved by vote of Presbytery which had placed the call of our Church in Dr. Gallaher's hands. However this was not accomplished without difficulty. More than one hundred people from the Waco Church appeared before Central Presbytery to explain their reasons for retaining Dr. Gallaher, but, in the face of the most urgent arguments of protest, the Presbytery finally acted to dissolve the relationship. In view of

these difficulties which had been overcome, it was felt more strongly than ever by our Commissioners that God had indeed called Dr. Gallaher to be our pastor.

September 2, 1956, Dr. Gallaher met with the Session in his study prior to the morning worship service. Dr. Gallaher addressed the session informally saying that it was his hope and expectation that together they would formulate a program for this church that would require the service and talents of each officer that this church might go forward and strengthen the work of Christ's Kingdom in both church and community.

The following telegram from Mr. Fogartie was received that morning: "Sept. 2. Charlotte N. C. 8:00 A.M. As today you begin a new pastoral relationship the thoughts and prayers of our family are for you all. May the ties between minister and congregation be lasting and strong. With deep affection.

James E. Fogartie"

CHAPTER 8

Dr. Thomas Burke Gallaher first occupied the pulpit of this Church as its minister September 3d, 1956, at the eleven o'clock morning worship service. After ten months without a pastor, it was truly a happy day for the congregation which overflowed the sanctuary to greet Dr. and Mrs. Gallaher, Sally and Tom, Jr.

It has been said that God provides the right leader for His people when they seek His guidance. The Pulpit Nominating Committee expressed this same idea in its report to the congregation when it stated that it truly felt that Dr. Gallaher had been sent to this Church. In a short time the members of the congregation were echoing this statement.

The warmth and personal interest of Dr. Gallaher in each member of his church was first manifested in the incredibly short time it took for him to call upon and make the acquaintance of each family in his congregation. His people, hungry for a close relationship with their pastor, responded warmly to his friendly and personal interest.

In a short time it became necessary to resume two morning worship services, which have continued since with the exception of the summer months of 1959.

Dr. Gallaher quickly identified himself with many civic activities, becoming a member of the Ministerial Alliance, the Board of the Red Cross and the Rotary and Noon Civics Clubs. In 1957 the First Presbyterian Church joined with representatives of other churches of Fort Smith and Van Buren to organize the Twin City Council of Churches. Dr. Gallaher has, with others, represented our Church on this Council.

With all these interests and the demands upon his time and energies, he is never too busy for a friendly chat or to give helpful advice. No need of any member of his congregation goes unheeded when it comes to his attention. In this he has the help and support of Mrs. Gallaher. When we recall the remark of the Moderator concerning her, at the congregational meeting which issued the call to Dr. Gallaher, we realize that his joking comment was a statement of a real truth. During these three years, her quiet, gentle influence has reached through the whole membership of the Church. She has endeared herself to everyone by her loving interest and countless thoughtful deeds, and to every member of the Women of the Church, she is some one **very special**.

During these three years of Dr. Gallaher's ministry there has been a remarkable upsurge of interest in the Church and its work. This has resulted in a feeling of unity and fellowship which is truly heart warming. The Church has become conscious of the need of men, women and young people **working together**. Instances of this are found in the fact that women have been placed on some committees of the Session and Diaconate. Two committees have been formed

by Dr. Gallaher, a Staff Committee, and a Long Range Planning Committee, each composed of both men and women who meet at stated times to consider questions of importance to this Church.

A new system of selecting officers of the church has been effected. A nominating Committee consisting of members of the Session and Diaconate, and men and women from the congregation at large is chosen. This committee receives names suggested by the congregation which are presented to it and voted upon at a called meeting.

A group of younger members of the church interested in dramatics, has been formed into an organization called "The Presbyterian Players." Beautiful Christmas and Easter pageants have been presented each year and have been so well done that they were televised over a local channel. In 1959 a presentation of an old English morality play "Everyman" was produced under the direction of Mrs. Gallaher. At this time the Men's Chorus was so well received that it has become a permanent group with the name "Presbyterian Men's Chorus."

The eleven o'clock morning worship service has been broadcast over a local radio station for the past three years. This is a very wonderful thing for members of this Church unable to attend church services. It is doubtless enjoyed by many other Fort Smithians also.

Under Dr. Gallaher's ministry the Church Council has become very active in planning the whole program of the Church each year. In fact there has never been, perhaps, in our history, a period when the work of the entire Church has been so well organized and coordinated.

The Committees of the Session and Diaconate, also those special committees of the Church and all those of the Women of the Church and the Church School, work both separately and together. One reason for this is the belief of our pastor that an informed membership becomes an interested membership and that in turn produces a working membership. One thing that is most noticeable, to those who have lived through many pastorates, is the fact that the number of those taking an active part in the work of their church has greatly increased.

A weekly news letter, which for the past two years has been mailed to each church family, is one thing that has kept the congregation in close touch with one another as well as with affairs of the church. This has been of inestimable value in the life of our Church.

The second year of his ministry Dr. Gallaher instituted a "Family Night" each Sunday evening from October 1st to Easter. The congregation is divided into groups, alphabetically arranged. Each group is responsible for a specified Sunday night with two couples to act as hosts and two couples to plan and provide the snack supper which is served in the Fellowship Center at six o'clock. Three couples act as a general committee for overall arrangements. Every Sunday

evening at five o'clock there is a ten minute worship service conducted by the Adult Bible Classes and Senior and Pioneer Groups in rotation. The music is provided by the children's choir. The young people go to their separate meetings and the adults participate in a fifty minute program, covering a wide range of topics.

At various times there have been panel discussions on topics of general interest; also studies of the Bible and Presbyterian beliefs led by Dr. Gallaher. In the fall of 1959 the pastor taught a class on Revelation, and a very successful Leadership Training School was completed in February of 1960. At six o'clock all groups gather for supper and a period of recreation and fellowship.

One of the purely social events has been a revival of the old-fashioned church picnic. For the last two years this has been held the last week in May at Creekmore Park. The good food, games and rides on the miniature train have been enjoyed by young and old alike.

Two very valuable additions to the work of the Church School have been instituted by Dr. Gallaher. One is a class for young adults to bridge the gap between the Senior High group and the Fellowship Class, the latter primarily a class for young (and not so young) couples.

The Ushers Guild is also a new thing in this Church. It is a group of younger men who assist the Deacons in the service of ushering at the two worship services each Sunday.

Another innovation is a class, or classes, for parents of children of various age groups. This is conducted at intervals for the purpose of informing parents on the material and methods used in their children's work.

The Communicants classes, begun several years ago, as a preparation for young people coming into the Church, are being continued for a period of six weeks in the Pre-Easter period. Dr. Gallaher has added to this an "Inquirers Class" for adults who are considering uniting with this Church. This also meets one night a week for the Pre-Easter period and is followed by a fellowship hour.

The activities of the young people are being broadened and strengthened under the leadership of the Christian Education Committee and the new Director of Christian Education, Mrs. Thomas C. Fleeman, whose interest in and work with the young people extends over a period of years. She gives them a capable and consecrated leadership.

The Youth Choirs, revived during Mr. Fogartie's ministry, have been enlarged under Mrs. James Wilson's direction. They have now become a regular part of the worship services of this Church. Their music and their devotion to this service which they are rendering is an inspiration to our congregation.

The summer of 1959 our Church joined the Church Baseball League. A number of the younger men of the church have given freely of their time in coaching and umpiring the Presbyterian baseball teams. The boys have become very enthusiastic in their rivalry with other Church teams, and the grandstands of the various parks are filled each summer evening with "rooters" from the families and friends of the young players.

Upon the resignation of Mr. King Howard in the summer of 1958, as Director of Church Activities, the Session authorized the call of the Rev. Robert I. Doom to become the Assistant Minister and director of the young people's work. Mr. Doom and his family arrived in Fort Smith in the fall of 1958 and remained here until September 1, 1959, when he left to continue his education at Princeton Theological Seminary. The interest and good wishes of the Church go with him and his family as he continues his training for his life's work in the service of the Church.

For the past two years the Women of the Church have been working toward building up a good Church Library. Many books and commentaries have been given as memorials. The books are catalogued and Mr. and Mrs. Tom Epperson are doing a real service for the church in acting as librarians. Miss Ruth Gates and Mrs. Charles Causer are also giving much help in the Library.

Other memorials have been given within these past two years. After the untimely death of Maurice Bedwell, Jr., many friends wished to establish a memorial fund to purchase a lasting gift for the Church School, as a tribute to his service as Superintendent of the Sunday School, as well as to every department of the Church he loved and so faithfully served. The memorial purchased was a caliphone, an instrument designed for use as an amplifier and a record player. This has been a useful gift.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper observed on the first Sunday in July, 1959, was a memorable occasion, as a gift to this Church was dedicated by the Minister and used for the first time at this service. This was a complete set of communion vessels in sterling silver, hand wrought by a silversmith at Tiffany's. There are sixteen holders for the individual wine glasses, which, when placed in the two sets, are topped by a plain heavy silver cover surmounted by the Cross. The Cross is also engraved on the plates for the communion bread and on the silver urn from which the wine is poured. This beautiful gift was presented to the Church by Ruling Elder, John T. Barrett, who had previously given the communion plates anonymously. In the dedication service Mr. Barrett said that he wished to give them in memory of his father, Ruling Elder James A. Barrett, Ruling Elder B. F. Beckman and Deacon John H. Carnahan, all faithful and consecrated officers of this Church for many years. Mr. Barrett said that in giving these vessels for use in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, his thought had been that only the very finest and most perfect gift should be given to the King, and

that had been his whole thought in the selection which he was presenting in the service of his Lord and Master. The entire membership of this Church is grateful for this lovely gift which adds immeasurably to the beauty and dignity of our Communion Service.

In this same connection, a very interesting event of recent months was the discovery of the silver communion vessels which had been used first in the little Chapel on Second Street, later in the Eighth Street church and in our present sanctuary until the introduction of the individual communion service. The quaint old urn, two matching goblets and plates, as well as the baptismal bowl, have been repaired and restored as a gift from the Women of the Church. They have a sentimental value which cannot be measured, and will be an everlasting reminder of the love and devotion of our forefathers to their God and to their Church.

For many years the First Presbyterian Church has felt a definite responsibility resting upon it to undertake some steps looking toward the establishment of an Out-Post Chapel, which would lead eventually to another Presbyterian Church U.S. in Fort Smith. In 1946, the centennial year of our Church, Dr. Hickman called a meeting to discuss this matter, but no further action was taken. Several years later visits were made, on one or two occasions, by representatives of the Church Extension Board of the General Assembly for the purpose of making a survey of various sections of the City for a location which would be suitable and where a church was needed. The last survey made in recent years was followed by a religious census of the section selected. This survey was undertaken in 1955 by men and women of the First Church.

"As a result of these efforts over this period of years, and with an additional church in mind, the Long Range Planning Committee secured, with congregational approval, three acres of property lying between North M and N Streets on North 44th Street in the Sunny-mede area. This property was purchased at a total cost of \$16,000. The source of the funds was \$4,000 from church extension funds of our own, \$4,000 from memorial funds given by different people over the years to our Church and \$8,000 from the Church Extension Committee of Washburn Presbytery. The purchase of these three acres is for the future home of a new and additional church; it was not purchased with the idea of moving our present congregation to that area."

(The above paragraph is quoted from a report to the congregation issued by the Long Range Planning Committee in June 1959).

These are briefly a few of the outstanding events and accomplishments of the past three years in the life of this Church. However the mere recounting of them does not really tell the full story. There are intangible benefits which words do not express. There is a fellowship and a feeling of "togetherness" which has been created within the membership of the First Presbyterian Church. This can be felt rather than expressed. There is the close tie between our

pastor and his people which is expressed in Biblical terms as the loving care of the Shepherd over his flock.

With the present atmosphere of our Church and with the action recently taken by its officers and congregation looking so definitely and certainly into a future growth and expansion, one sees the purpose of this Church to grow and develop with the growth and development of Fort Smith.

In a retrospective view of the 114 years of our Church's history one feels that its present members are sustaining and perpetuating a glorious heritage bequeathed to us by the hundreds of dedicated men and women who first had the vision, and who, with their descendants bore "the heat and burden of the day."

So we end the history of this beloved Church with the prayer that in the future, as in the past, it may ever be true to the sacred trust of upholding the "Faith of Our Fathers."

CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

THE WOMEN'S BIBLE CLASS

For several years, this class met with the Men's Class in a small frame building on the site of the church parlor, and was taught by Mr. A. L. Peacher, Sr. In 1921 the class divided and in 1922 the Woman's Bible Class was organized with Mrs. Dora L. Kimmons as the teacher.

This class met for a number of years in various rooms of the Educational Building, but with the completion of the connecting addition, the church parlor became the meeting place and continues to be at the present time.

For many years the class was known as the Dora L. Kimmons Bible Class in honor of the faithful and gifted teacher who had worked tirelessly in the First Presbyterian Church from the days of the little Union Chapel at 2nd and B Streets. Dora Lipe came to Fort Smith about 1870 with a group of teachers from Illinois to teach in what was for Arkansas and Fort Smith a new venture—the Public Schools. Prior to that time, and especially during the Reconstruction years, children in Arkansas, as in other Southern States, were educated in private schools or by tutors. Miss Lipe married Mr. J. K. Kimmons of Mississippi in 1883, and together they immediately entered into the life of this Church.

Mrs. Kimmons taught for many years in the Fort Smith schools and, with a brilliant mind and broad education, she built up a large class of women interested in Bible study, and through the sixteen years of her devoted service probably every book of the Bible was covered.

In 1938, at the age of eighty-five she felt it expedient to make her home with a daughter in Arlington, Virginia, and it became necessary to find a new teacher. Mrs. Harry P. Warner, who had substituted for Mrs. Kimmons since 1925, was elected as regular teacher, and has taught the class since that time. Mrs. Berenice Logue has been the faithful and capable assistant for many years. Mrs. P. D. McKennon has also substituted at times.

From a membership of approximately twenty-five in 1922, the number has increased to seventy-five active members. It is impossible to give a list of the women who have served through the years as officers, but, as is the case with the Men's Bible Class, the list would give a good cross section of the membership of First Church. Perhaps the Women's Bible Class may be forgiven the statement, if it sounds boastful, that the records show that no member through the years, with two or three exceptions, has ever dropped out of the class unless removed by illness, change of residence, or death. This shows the loyalty and interest of its members.

As is the case with the Men's Class, the Women's Class has contributed many services, both of time and money to outside or church related activities. For twenty years a faithful group of women conducted a worship service once a month at the Mother's Club of the Federated Welfare Association, discontinuing it only with the closing of the Welfare Association in 1959. Mrs. P. D. McKennon served as chairman for twenty years. At Thanksgiving and Easter a party was sponsored for the Mother's Club and their children.

For about the same period of time the Men's and Women's Classes sponsored a Sunday afternoon Worship Service once a month at the County Hospital. The late E. H. (Pat) Patterson conducted the service and Mr. J. E. (Pat) Garner gave a brief devotional message. Alice Louise Davies played the piano, with several members of the Women's Class helping with the singing and fellowship with the patients. The Bible Class for many years took Christmas bags of candy and fruit to the patients, but have now changed it to Easter.

Ever since its organization, the Women's Bible Class has contributed substantially to various church related benevolences. The partial support of an invalid member of this Church was for many years assumed by this class. Upon her death, a retired Missionary to China became the object of the contribution, which in both cases was felt to be a gift of love. Several young people from Caddo Valley have been given material assistance in the matter of clothing and personal needs in their effort to attend Arkansas College.

The Woman's Bible Class, through the years, has furnished many leaders of the women's work, presidents of Women of the Church, Circle Chairmen and Bible study leaders.

More important than all these things however has been the spiritual uplift that comes from a dedicated study of God's Word, and the association through the years of women who feel strongly "the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love."

FRIENDSHIP CLASS

This class was organized in 1936, to fill a need for a group of women between the Women's Bible Class age group and Young Adults. It was begun mostly for Business Women, but has developed into a combination group; there are now many women in it who are not employed.

Mrs. J. Frank Turner was the first teacher; then Mrs. T. C. Fleeman taught for fifteen years, regularly. During that time the class studied the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, over a period of twelve years. Credits were given in these courses. Subsequent teachers have been Mrs. Nanah Gordon,, Mrs. G. E. Berson and Miss Mildred Watts. Another member of the class, Mrs. F. S. Renshaw, has substituted on a number of occasions.

Many elective courses have been given through the years, and the class has furnished many Sunday School teachers, Bible teachers and other leaders among the Women of the Church. It has ever been an active, participating, group in Bible study.

Putting Christian love into action, the class has sponsored deserving High School students, both here and at Caddo Valley; also students at Arkansas College. One outstanding service in His name was helping a young man, a member of our Church in getting through Austin Seminary.

This group, though small, in number, will be remembered by what they have done for deserving young men fitting themselves for the Ministry.

THE MENS BIBLE CLASS

The Men's Bible Class of the First Presbyterian Church was organized in November, 1921, during the ministry of Dr. W. W. Harrison. Prior to this time, and before the present Educational Building was erected, a class of men and women was taught by Mr. A. L. Peacher, Sr. This class met in a small frame building which had been used for the Infant Department during Dr. McKay's pastorate. This building was located about where the church parlor is now.

Unfortunately, no records were kept of officers or members, but there are a few members of the present Men's and Women's Classes who were also members of this early class. With the organization of the Men's Class in 1921, the first accurate records appear. In October of 1922, the following officers were elected for 1922-1923; F. F. Ford, President; J. B. Wilson, Vice-President; Arch Monroe, Secretary-Treasurer; J. A. Barrett, Teacher; H. P. Warner, Assistant Teacher. The class roll at this time numbered thirty-three.

Through the years since, this class has been active and its members loyal. Some men on the roll today have been faithful members ever since the inception of the class. New members have been constantly added and each year has seen a group of new officers who have done their work faithfully and well.

The Men's Bible Class has participated in every activity of the church, contributing generously to every call for time, service and financial support. These calls have been too numerous to list, ranging from help given quietly to widows and orphans in need and to many church related activities. Many substantial gifts have been sent to Caddo Valley Academy and many students going from Caddo to Arkansas College have been helped along the way by generous gifts.

The records of the Men's Class are not complete, and there is not sufficient space, to give a list of all the men who have served as officers and members, but the result of their labors is apparent in the record of the class and the membership, which has been from 60 to 75 consistently. During one intensive membership campaign the attendance reached 100. However, figures and statistics can never reflect the influence which the Men's Bible Class has exerted in the life of our Church.

The regular teachers of the Men's Bible Class have been: J. A. Barrett, H. P. Warner, Dr. J. W. Hickman, J. E. (Pat) Garner, Hugh Rogers (deceased), Charlie Hubbard and John Barrett and Elwood Blass, the present teacher.

Many visiting ministers and other speakers have appeared before this class at various times, whom the men have felt it a privilege to hear.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORK

In the early years of the First Presbyterian Church, departmental organization of the various age groups was unknown. With no building except the Sanctuary in which Sunday School classes could be taught, there was little chance for much organization. Of course there was no organized work among the young people. All activities of the young people centered in the Sunday School.

The earliest clipping found was in the "New Era" of June 23, 1869. It was printed as follows:

Children's Concert

A musical entertainment—viz: Cantata of the Flower Queen, will be given by a portion of the children of the Presbyterian Sunday School of this city on Friday next, the 25th inst., at the Hall of the St. Charles Hotel.

Doors open at 7½ P.M. Exercises begin at 8 P.M. Admission \$1.00. Tickets to be had at the stores of H. Stone, W. M. Hightower, Bocquin & Reutzel, and Euper & Cattro.

Old records contain an account in the year 1871 of a picnic given by the young people of the Baptist, Christian, Methodist, Presbyterian and Episcopal Churches. This was called a "Sunday School Reunion" and the purpose was to establish a closer bond of fellowship between these religious bodies. Perhaps this was a forerunner of an organization three quarters of a century later—"The Christian Youth Fellowship of Fort Smith," to which our Church belongs.

We know from the scrapbooks of church history that through the last years of the Nineteenth Century, and the first twenty years of this century, there was no lack of Christian activities among the children and young people of this Church, but it was entirely local and largely denominational in its scope.

The West-Ark Council of the Boy Scouts of America was organized in 1920. Troop 23 of the First Presbyterian Church was one of the first troops to be organized locally. A great majority of the young men of our Church have belonged to Troop 23, and they have been led by Scout Masters of our Church. These men have given much time and effort to the work, realizing its value. One elder, Mr. Raymond Orr, and a deacon, James S. Beckman, have given years of service to and held high offices in the West-Ark Council. Dr. Anderson and Dr. Parma McKennon, Jr., organized the first Cub Scout Pack in a Fort Smith church. The Cub Scouts now work through the public schools.

Dr. W. W. Harrison in 1924 first organized the youth of the Church into groups. Junior and Senior Christian Endeavor Societies

were formed. The junior group had as supervisors Misses Annie Engel and Ruth Campbell. Miss Newell Word was the advisor for the senior society. These groups met for an hour preceding the Sunday evening service, which they sometimes conducted.

Dr. Frank Anderson in 1926 brought to Fort Smith the first Director of Religious Education, Miss Emma Dietsch of Louisville, Kentucky. Miss Dietsch married Mr. Bernard Barton in 1928, but continued her interest in the work of the young people. Their home in later years, "Lazy Acres" near Mountainburg, has been the scene for many pleasant gatherings of these groups as well as adults. During the two years Miss Dietsch was the Director of Religious Education the groups were graded and became the Junior, Intermediate, Senior and Young People. There were many activities, such as overnight conferences with the young people of other churches in Washburn Presbytery. There were hikes to places of interest, and sunrise services at Thanksgiving and Easter. At Christmas there was carol singing for shut-ins. Parties were given for college students home for the holidays.

During this period a choir of young people was organized by Mr. Carl Wortz, Jr. For the first time they had robes patterned after the youth choirs in city churches. The young people, trained by their leader, gave the congregation much pleasure, besides enjoying the fun and fellowship of their meetings.

It was about this time that the summer conferences were begun at Rudy, Petit Jean and Mt. Nebo. Hardy, Arkansas was one of the very first spots selected for a summer conference. One of the women of our Church, who was active at this time in the youth work, recalls that there was a money-making scheme among the young people to raise funds for the Hardy Conference. It was called a "Salemagundi" but just what this was she does not recall. Only the name which fascinated her, and probably all of the group, remains in her memory.

Miss Mamie Gene Cole followed Mrs. Barton in 1928 and served until 1930. She was very popular with the young people and they continued their activities. She was much interested in dramatics and soon organized groups which presented some very creditable Biblical plays and pageants.

Miss Sarah Frances Marshall succeeded Miss Cole and the work of the young people continued to grow. She resigned to marry the Rev. Harmon B. Ramsey. Her successor was Miss Margaret Crouch, who came from South Carolina, soon after Dr. Hickman's arrival. She served well for a period of seven years and left many warm friends among the adults as well as the youth.

Miss Betty Groenlund became the next Director of Religious Education but was here only a short time until she married Alfred Lee Peacher, Jr., the son of Ruling Elder A. L. Peacher, Sr., and Mrs. Peacher. They went to Texas to reside. Miss Ruby McDurmon, 1938-1940, and Miss Leila McGeath, 1941-1942, followed Mrs. Peacher in that order, and during their periods of service they not only directed the activities of the youth group but acted as church secretaries, even mimeographing the Weekly Bulletins. Following Miss McDurmon's resignation, Miss Dottie Ann Mapes (Mrs. L. V. Sevier) served in a temporary capacity as secretary until Miss McGeath arrived in 1941.

During these years under the direction of the young people's sponsors and the next Director of Religious Education, Miss Helen Pemberton, the records contain many clippings concerning the activities of the youth of this Church. There were rallies of the Young People's League of Washburn Presbytery at Charleston, Dardanelle, Fayetteville and Hazel Glen, as well as in our own Church.

In the years before 1940 the older boys were very much influenced by the Christian leadership of one of the deacons, Hurd J. Miller, who made his mountain cottage a meeting place for the boys of Senior High age. For several years he taught a class of boys of that age and was their friend and counselor until his untimely death. In fact no words can be said in sufficient praise of the many men and women of this Church who sponsored these youth groups and whose counsel and help were responsible for the growth of their interests and activities. Their names are too many to be included here, but they are indelibly recorded in the hearts and lives of these boys and girls who are now mature men and women.

Miss Helen Pemberton left this church to become a Missionary to Mexico in 1947. Mrs. Ronald Gardner became Church Secretary and served as temporary Director of Religious Education until the arrival of Mr. Bowles, Assistant Minister and Director of Young Peoples Activities. At various times Mrs. Thomas C. Fleeman has also served in these capacities, as in many others.

The young people have become increasingly active through the years from 1936-1960 in all rallies, camps and conferences. They have held many offices on Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly level. In 1952 they became the Presbyterian Youth Fellowship. They have been of great service also in the Vacation Church Schools which have always been successful in this church.

The participation of the Senior Hi and Pioneer Choirs has been a most important contribution to their church. They have taken major parts in all church pageants, especially the outdoor Christmas pageants given by this church from 1951-1955, as well as those of the last three Christmas and Easter seasons, which have been televised.

In concluding this chapter, we are conscious of many omissions, but those who passed their youth in this church will remember the countless services they individually gave and the many hours of happy fellowship they enjoyed.

From the year 1924 when the first Christian Endeavor Societies were formed, until this year of 1960, there have been great changes and an ever broadening scope in the activities of the youth of the church. At present all young people's work is under the direction of the Christian Education Committee of the Session, and the Women of the Church. The work of these committees in the First Presbyterian Church is recognized as outstanding in the General Assembly.

HISTORY OF THE WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

"WE GIRLS"

This was the first organization for the young girls of the Church. No definite date is given in the old accounts but it must have been soon after the building of the brick church on 8th and B, as the object of the "We Girls" organization was "To make money to buy a beautiful gas fixture of a million prisms (so it seemed to us) to be used in our new brick church." "We Girls" were all members of a Sunday School class of High School girls, so it took a long time to raise enough money to pay for this handsome ornament, and the price of \$75.00 seemed very large! It was bought through Mr. George Sengel who waited patiently until our small payments had accumulated.

Mr. and Mrs. Sample and Mrs. A. M. Dickins lived so near the church that "We Girls" held frequent meetings in their homes. The officers were: President, Miss Emily Farrow (later the wife of the pastor who succeeded Mr. Sample); Vice President, Miss Stella McCorkle, later Mrs. Ed Pierce (a daughter of Dr. and Mrs. J. S. McCorkle); Secretary, Miss Gussie Bulgin (Mrs. J. L. Phillips, grandmother of Lewis Phillips, Jr., and David); Treasurer Miss Allie Hunt (sister of Mrs. J. H. Carnahan, later Mrs. C. R. Birnebaum). Members: Miss Gunter Payne (Mrs. Fred Turner, a sister of Mrs. A. M. Morrow and aunt of Mrs. Prentice Rice, Mrs. Mable Patten and Mrs. Henry Armstrong), Miss Grace Keam (Mrs. Leon Ross), Miss Dora Hunt (Mrs. J. H. Carnahan), Miss Maggie Boles (Mrs. Fred Speer), Miss Pearl McCracken.

An amusing story of "We Girls" is recounted in an old clipping concerning a flag drill put on in a skating rink and the story relates that "the entire town turned out for it." Mr. Ed Haglin was credited with assisting in the production and Capt. Frank Eberle drilled the group quite thoroughly in "strict military fashion." The costumes were red and white striped pleated skirts, with tight blue bodices decorated with white stars, red caps, borrowed from the "Border Rifles," and high black shoes. There was trouble here as the girls wanted to wear their own strapped slippers, but the Captain said "no" and military discipline prevailed.

The next year, the beautiful chandelier having been purchased, and the majority of the girls having gone away to school, "We Girls" disbanded.

The organization following this was known as "The Kings Daughters." This was a national organization for young church women and was organized in this church by Miss Grace Keam (one of "We Girls") who had joined The Kings Daughters in New York

City. She and Misses Maggie Boles, Camilla and Henrietta Clarkson and Una Hall were the charter members of this Church. This organization flourished for many years, having its membership among the girls and young women of our church. When the Woman's Auxiliary was organized in 1918 The Kings Daughters and the Ladies Aid and the Missionary Society all merged into the one organization, the Woman's Auxiliary.

The very earliest of the Women's organizations was the Ladies Aid Society which was organized in the fall of 1868 by Mrs. Sample "to promote social and religious fellowship among the members, to advance the interests of the Church, and to improve the moral standing in the community in which we live."

First officers were: President, Mrs. W. A. Sample; Secretary, Mrs. J. N. Hewes; Treasurer, Mrs. Hubbard Stone. Among charter members were Mrs. Hannah B. Sparks, Mrs. J. H. Sparks, Mrs. S. B. Atkinson, Mrs. Mary Haglin and Mrs. Amelia Hunt. Later presidents were: Mrs. S. H. Sherlock, Mrs. John H. Rogers, Mrs. J. K. Barnes, Mrs. W. B. Hendricks, Mrs. McKay, Mrs. C. B. Eads, mother of William Eads, Sr., Mrs. James F. Read, Mrs. Henry C. Read. Through the years, this little band of women nobly lived up to the aims expressed in their ideals of service. Among the tangible evidences of their labors are the following: The purchase of the lots for the 8th and B Church, at a cost of \$600; the purchase of the carpet and pad for the new church on 12th at a cost of \$438.00 and for the purchase of the first organ after the completion of the new church. These may seem insignificant sums these days, but then they were very large and represented much dedicated labor.

MISSIONARY SOCIETY

The Women's Missionary Society was organized in September 1886 by Mrs. W. A. Sample, wife of the pastor. Mrs. Sample was President, Mrs. M. F. Kennedy, Vice President, and Mrs. F. M. Tenny, Secretary and Treasurer.

The members were pledged to raise \$100 each year toward the support of Miss Tidball, a Missionary to China. In 1889 Miss Tidball retired because of ill health, and this support was given to Mrs. L. P. Fulton, Missionary to Japan. In 1896 the \$100 was given to Miss Una Hall, a daughter of First Church who was a Missionary to China from this Church.

In 1898 Mrs. R. A. Clarkson was president, Mrs. John Smith P, vice president, Mrs. A. E. Kimmons, treasurer, Miss Minnie Barkdull, secretary. The meetings were held the fourth Tuesday each month and in 1895 the membership was twenty-five. Later presidents were Mrs. M. McN McKay, Mrs. Angus McLeod (mother of Mrs. Joe Irwin), Mrs. Logan, Mrs. Mary Hamilton (grandmother of Mrs. Cooper Hudspeth) and Mrs. Henry Read.

At this time Mrs. R. A. Clarkson established, with the help of other interested women, a small Orphans Home. This was done through the efforts of women from all Protestant churches and has grown into the Rosalie Tilles Childrens Home, an institution of which all Fort Smith citizens are proud.

The Missionary Society merged with the Ladies Aid and The Kings Daughters in 1918 to form The Women's Auxiliary.

WOMAN'S AUXILIARY
now called
WOMEN OF THE CHURCH

The Woman's Auxiliary became the official women's organization of the Presbyterian Church U. S. on August 10, 1912, by action of the General Assembly.

Mrs. W. C. Winsborough, the first president of the newly formed Auxiliary, and Mrs. E. F. Shannon of Fayetteville, came to Fort Smith on January 14, 1913 to organize the Auxiliary of Washburn Presbytery with Mrs. Shannon elected as President and Mrs. Ned Bowers of Morrilton as Recording Secretary.

The Woman's Auxiliary of the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith was organized on Tuesday, February 25, 1918, by Mrs. W. W. Harrison, wife of the Pastor. The following officers were elected: Mrs. Henry C. Read, President, Mrs. Catherine Boles, Vice President, Mrs. William Monroe, Secretary, Mrs. Rudolph Woods, Treasurer.

The Auxiliary has always been just what its name implies—an auxiliary to the church. By action of the General Assembly in 1949, the name was changed to "Women of the Church." The directive stated that the change was made because it was the feeling of the Commissioners to the General Assembly that "Auxiliary" was a misnomer, since the women were a part of the church and should be so recognized in the name of their organization.

The program aim as set forth in the Auxiliary was stated as follows: "To give to the members of the Woman's Auxiliary a well rounded program built to develop the spiritual life of the individual woman, to help her meet the problems of life as she faces them today, and to keep her informed regarding the on going work of the Kingdom."

Through all the years the Auxiliary never wavered in its adherence to the aim expressed in its organization, and its successor, The Women of the Church, cherishes these ideals and the goal which has ever been—"Every woman enlisted in some study and service for Christ."

The framework of the Woman's Auxiliary was set up in the beginning by the Board of Women's Work, which is now located in the beautiful new Presbyterian Center in Atlanta, Georgia. During the years many minor changes and also many improvements have been made, until it has been said, in jest, that no group is more highly organized than the Women of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., unless it be the Standard Oil of New Jersey. Whether this is true

or not, the work of the Women of the Church is very efficient. The same plan is followed in Bible study and in enlisting the support of the women in all the agencies of the church, whether it is a small country church of one hundred members, or a city church of three thousand.

The committees were set up by the Board of Women's Work to cover every phase of the work of the church. The membership of the Auxiliary of each local church has always been divided into Circles. In this Church there has been one evening circle primarily for business women, with the others being day time circles, varying in number from nine to eleven. At various times a group of the younger members are organized into a Training Circle, with an older woman as sponsor. They thus become acquainted with all phases of the women's work. They also enjoy the companionship of women with similar interests. This group is kept together, usually, for two years and then assimilated into the other circles.

With this exception and that of the Evening Circle, the membership of all circles is shifted each year. The circle officers are Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Bible Study Leader and Dinner Chairman, with secretaries for each of the church causes—Spiritual Growth, World Missions, Church Extension, Stewardship, Annuities and Relief, Christian Education and General Fund Agencies.

The Executive Board consists of the general officers, the chairman of all church causes, standing committees and the circle chairmen. This board meets once a month. The business of the Women of the Church is transacted by this Board, then taken to the circles for discussion and to the general meeting of the Women of the Church for action.

It would be impossible in a volume of this size to give any detailed report of the scope of the women's work. For the same reason it is impossible to record the names of the hundreds of women who, from the year 1868 when the women's groups were formed to this year of 1960, have given unselfishly of their time, talents and money, to accomplish the work recorded in this chapter.

It has been in recent years, the policy of the Presbyterian Church U.S. to discourage money making projects by the Women of the Church. Voluntary and sacrificial giving is the only means approved by the General Assembly or local sessions. In years gone by church dinners served to organizations, bazaars and rummage sales were the accepted thing. In that period was published the 1920 Dixie Cook Book, with paid advertising solicited from local merchants to pay for the publication.

By 1929, the edition of 1920 was completely exhausted and there were so many demands for it, that the Session authorized its republication, but with no solicitation or advertisements. In 1939 another edition was published with the same restrictions. With the

revision of old recipes and the addition of many new ones the book enjoyed the same success as its predecessors.

For several years there have been so many requests for "any Dixie Cook Book," and with none available, the women in 1959 requested the Session to authorize the fourth edition. A large committee worked for several months and the book produced as a result, is the largest and most attractive one yet printed.

The Dixie Cook Book came from the press on November 4th, 1958, and on December 31st, 1958, the entire bill of \$3,000 had been paid. Since there are hundreds of copies still to be sold, and with an amount running into four figures in the Dixie Cook Book account, the women expect to realize a goodly sum in the months to come.

Because of the financial success, and the fellowship enjoyed by the women in the thirty-eight years of this project, and also because practically all of the active members of the Woman's Auxiliary have worked on some one of the four editions, each Presbyterian woman feels a very particular interest and pride in this book which is peculiarly our own.

An annual budget is set up which is divided into Current Expenses and Benevolences approximately on a fifty-fifty basis. This budget for 1959, the year just ended, was \$2,886.00 which was pledged and over subscribed by several hundred dollars.

This budget does not include the voluntary offerings for the following assembly wide causes: World Missions, Birthday Offering, Church Extension and the Joy Gift, a Christmas offering for aged ministers and their dependents. A fifth offering is an Arkansas Synodical Cause, established in 1951—The Loving Heart Scholarship Fund, which gives scholarships of \$450 each to young people of college caliber from Vera Lloyd and Caddo Valley. These scholarships are to Arkansas College at Batesville. The Women of our church furnish one of these scholarships.

The entire voluntary offering for all the above named benevolences in 1959 amounted to \$1,348.44 over and above the budget.

The matter of sending delegates to conferences and training schools was included in the budget of the Auxiliary as early as 1934, when a provision was made for sending delegates to the Conference on Woman's Work at Montreat, North Carolina. This has been continued ever since. The delegate has usually been the President of the Auxiliary, or other delegates chosen by the Auxiliary. For many years the budget has included funds to pay the expenses of several delegates to Arkansas Synodical Training School at Batesville. At various times young people have been sent by the Women of the Church to camps and conferences for young people.

The Auxiliary in 1941 included in the budget the money to pay the expenses of a Negro woman from a Fort Smith Church to the

Negro Women's Training School at Philander Smith College in Little Rock. This has been a matter of great satisfaction to the women of this church to continue this work, as these delegates have brought back wonderful reports and much of value to their own churches.

The women of First Church have always been active in the work and meetings of Arkansas Synodical and Washburn Presbyterian and have over the years held important offices in both. This church has also entertained the annual meetings of each in rotation.

The Women of the Church joined the United Council of Church Women when a chapter was formed in Fort Smith. Several of our women have served as officers including that of President and Vice President. This Church was the hostess church in 1959 for the State Convention of the United Council of Church Women.

It is, of course, very natural that the Women of the Church should be vitally concerned with the work of our Youth Groups. In 1945 the circles, in rotation, began to serve Sunday night suppers to the young people, following their group meetings. This was continued until the Family Night Sunday evening meetings were begun in 1957.

From the days of the Woman's Missionary Society of 1886, the women of the First Presbyterian Church have studied about, worked for and given to Foreign Missions—now called World Missions. It would require several pages to list the names of Missionaries on furlough who have spoken in this church, and Assembly's Secretaries of Foreign Missions who have visited here, to say nothing of the books studied. This Church has, through the years, either supported or partly supported missionaries on the foreign field. Each year a book is studied by the women and the Church School which pertains to the foreign field selected by the secretary of World Missions as the objective for especial prayer and offering at the World Mission Season.

For over fifteen years the Women's Committee on World Missions has worked through Church World Service, packing many duffel bags with good warm clothing. This season of 1960 there has been a special appeal for blankets, especially for the sufferers of the terrible Japanese typhoon. Sixty good blankets have been sent from this church. All clothing is sent to the Processing Center in St. Louis for Overseas Relief.

A unique project of one member of the Women of the Church has for many years been the collection of good clothing (not shabby or out dated) which she sends to the "Missionary Closet" at Mission Court, Richmond, Virginia. This is one of four homes provided by the General Assembly for the temporary use of missionaries on furlough. One can imagine the help these clothes have been to returning missionaries. Long suffering husbands of this church who "lose their clothes" might find a suit or overcoat in this "Missionary Closet."

The women of this church have also included in their budget financial help for the furnishing of "Mission Ranch" at Austin, Texas, one of the other Furlough Homes.

The interest in World Missions have never diminished in any way the concern of the women in Home Missions now Church Extension. This has included in a very special way, the two children's homes of this Synod. Vera Lloyd Children's Home at Monticello has been the object of many gifts from this church, from both men and women.

Since 1940, a child has been sponsored each year by the women's group, which includes an item in our budget covering the cost of the child's clothing and also gifts for Christmas and birthday. These gifts are selected personally from the child's own list, as far as possible. The sponsors take a personal interest in "our child" and he or she is entertained in homes of our members for one week in the summer.

Caddo Valley Academy, in our own section of the State, and with greater need, has been even closer to our hearts. This has been a home and school for mountain children, either orphaned or from broken homes, who would never otherwise have had any of the advantages of education or a Christian home life. These things Dr. John J. Barr and his saintly wife (recently called to her reward) have given their lives to bring to these young people. Equally consecrated women have assisted them in this noble work as matrons of the dormitories, who are Mothers to these girls and boys. The women of this Church have felt it a privilege to contribute many things to Caddo Valley which have helped the administration in providing comforts and conveniences for their children.

The happiest undertaking of the women has been, for a number of years, furnishing Christmas for these children. In the fall each child receives a good pair of shoes from this church. At the December circle meetings generous gifts are brought, beautifully wrapped to be given Christmas morning to each child. Their names have been drawn the previous month and each boy and girl has been shopped for individually. The Christmas joy of the children is shared in the hearts of the donors many-fold.

The First Presbyterian Church having always been Home Mission minded, has shared its substance with other churches when they were in need. The churches at Prairie Grove, Hazel Glen, Alma, Charleston, Paris and Sulphur Springs were partially supported by funds contributed through Home Mission Benevolences. The women of this church helped to organize the Auxiliary of the Paris Church. Our women have shared a precious fellowship through the years with women of these smaller churches. For a number of years this has been promoted through District Conferences.

The women of First Church have always extended a helping hand to home mission projects outside Washburn Presbytery. For

several years the Snowball Home Mission field in Searcy County also was the recipient of many gifts.

The very first home mission work was done by the Auxiliary, prior to 1920, for a little mountain school and home near Winslow, when there were only paths and wagon roads over the mountains. "Mountain Crest" was operated by Home Missionaries, the Rev. and Mrs. Jeter. Probably one of the first radios ever in the Boston Mountains was sent by a group of interested women in this Auxiliary. It was operated on batteries, as there were no electrical lines in the mountains then. It is hard for us to realize in this day what that communication with the outside world meant to those isolated people. A fund was started in the Auxiliary by Mrs. Angus McLeod, mother of Mrs. Joe Irwin, called the Eliza McLeod Fund. This fund was kept in operation for several years by the Auxiliary.

Returning to more recent years, we find the scrapbooks full of the activities of the Women of the Church during the years of World War II. In 1942 the Presbyterian women sewed for many months on garments for the Red Cross, making a total of 749 bath robes, hospital shirts, pajamas and women's and children's garments. In 1943-1944 they gave a total of 16,981 volunteer hours in canteen, motor corps, surgical dressings, Gray Lady and U. S. O. work, as well as office work at the Red Cross.

When the numerous Sacred Concerts were given by soldiers from Camp Chaffee, the Women of the Church served a Sunday evening supper. They also entertained at Fellowship Dinners and at teas for the Chaplains, their wives and the new members and friends among the military.

For several years Christmas boxes, 125 or more, were prepared by the women for distribution by the Red Cross to patients at the Station Hospital. Christmas of 1944 found some of the women from this church serving a Christmas breakfast to the soldiers from nine to eleven o'clock at the U. S. O. Over one hundred men came in from Camp Chaffee and were grateful for a touch of home.

There were many prayer services in our Sanctuary during those tragic years when women and men bowed in silent prayer for the safety of the young men from this church in the service of our country.

With the return to normal life after the stress and strain of the war years, the Women of the Church returned to their routine activities. However, for several years, in fact until 1959 with the closing of Fort Chaffee, our church was fortunate in having as friends and members, many of the Military Personnel stationed here. These people enriched our church life in all departments, since many sang in the choir and were active in the work of the church. There were several couples who made a wonderful contribution to the youth groups and to the Young Adult Church School classes. The Women of the Church had greatly increased responsibilities in assimilating

these new members and friends into church activities. However, everything done along these lines was a joy and the rewards received far outweighed the effort.

The women of this church have over the years done a great deal of Social Service. This has been best expressed in the effort each circle makes to give Christian interest and help to the underprivileged family assigned to it during the year. In what is done in this service, there is the feeling of following the Savior's words "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

In 1958-1959 a prayer group was formed by members of the Women of the Church and the book "The Lower Levels of Prayer" was studied under the leadership of Dr. Gallaher. Upon its completion in the spring of 1958, the women decided to devote the next winter to a more intensive study, with a leader taking each chapter for a round table discussion.

At this time, January 1960, a prayer group has been formed for intercessory prayer. The objectives are prayer for the specific needs of our Church, for individual needs, and for the ill or bereaved, or any who are in especial need.

With the beginning of the women's work for the year 1960, an experiment is being made in the matter of the circles. Four "special interest circles" have been organized and the women were given the choice of going into one of these or remaining in a regular circle. It is too early yet to evaluate this experiment, but all indications point toward its being a success. The four circles are as follows: (1) Christian Education Circle; (2) Church Service Circle; (3) Home Circle; (4) Assimilation Evangelism Circle.

In closing this chapter, there is a real regret that so much worth telling should have to be omitted. The years covered from 1868 to 1960 have been years of consecrated and joyous service to the Master—a service freely given by hundreds of women. Each year several of our members pass over into that Heavenly Home to be "forever with the Lord." Each year there are some who grow less able to do the work they love. But, thank God, each year the younger and more vigorous women come to pick up the task; and so, as it has been in the past, may it be in all the years to come. May each generation say prayerfully that hymn of dedication—

"Seal us, O Holy Spirit
Seal us for service today."

A list of the Presidents since 1918 follows:

Mrs. Henry C. Read	Mrs. G. E. Berson
Mrs. F. F. Ford	Mrs. Thomas H. Hurt
Mrs. W. B. Hendrix	Mrs. Ander K. Orr
Mrs. W. W. Harrison	Mrs. Douglas Rogers
Mrs. George F. Youmans	Mrs. J. R. Woods
Mrs. C. A. Verbeck	Mrs. P. D. McKennon
Mrs. A. B. Yantis	Mrs. Harry P. Warner
Mrs. T. C. Fleeman	Mrs. R. M. Steele
Mrs. W. F. Flowers	Mrs. Collier Wenderoth, Sr.
Mrs. J. R. Woods	Mrs. W. G. Weeks, Jr.
Mrs. J. W. Hickman	Mrs. W. E. Knight
Mrs. George Berger	President Elect 1960 and 1961
Mrs. Howard Payne	

PRESBYTERIAL OFFICERS FROM WOMEN OF THE CHURCH

Mrs. W. B. Hendrix	Miss Katherine Hobson
Mrs. F. F. Ford	Mrs. A. B. Yantis
Mrs. J. C. Irwin	Mrs. E. N. Queen
Mrs. A. E. Langford	Mrs. Roy Vann
Mrs. W. N. Ayers	Mrs. Paul Lester
Mrs. Ronald Gardner	Mrs. Douglas Rogers, Sr.
Mrs. W. A. Stackable	Miss Fleda Scott
Mrs. J. L. Phillips	Mrs. Curtis Wood
Mrs. George Sengel, Sr.	Mrs. Ferol T. Carver
Mrs. W. W. Harrison	Mrs. W. H. Mapes
Mrs. W. T. Yadon	Mrs. J. R. Woods
Miss Annie Engel	Mrs. Ray Patterson
Mrs. Charles Seidlitz	Mrs. Thomas J. Blakemore
Mrs. Collier Wenderoth	Mrs. G. E. Berson, Jr.
Mrs. C. A. VerBeck	Mrs. R. L. Blackburn
Mrs. T. C. Fleeman	Mrs. Randolph Sengel

SYNODICAL OFFICERS

Mrs. R. E. Patterson	Mrs. Randolph Sengel
Mrs. Tom Cutting	Mrs. T. C. Fleeman
Mrs. G. E. Berson, Jr.	Mrs. David Flinn

ADVISORY COUNCIL BOARD OF WOMEN'S WORK

Mrs. Thomas C. Fleeman

DEACONS AND ELDERS

This Church is fortunate in having what is believed to be a complete list of every Ruling Elder and every Deacon who has ever served in either capacity. It would be impossible to record the contribution which each one has made, but the history of the accomplishments of the First Presbyterian Church is, in fact, a record of the contributions made by those whose names are here recorded.

There may be a question as to why a chapter has been written on the work of the Women of The Church and none for The Men of the Church. There is one very good reason; the women from the very beginning of the Presbyterian Church U. S. have always been organized into a group, or groups. These organizations have had regularly elected officers with historians who have kept records and scrapbooks recording their work.

Only in comparatively recent years has there been such an organization among the men of the Presbyterian Church U. S., and these groups have not been working units in most churches. However, all Presbyterians are cognizant of the fact that from the General Assembly down to the Presbytery level, the men make the decisions on all church problems, from theology to finance. Women of the Presbyterian Church U. S. are proud of the fact that it is the Men of the Church who decide matters of policy, organization and material matters. They wish only to supplement the work of the Session and Diaconate, with many of the details of church work being their responsibility, much as it is in the home.

The women of this Church are proud and happy to have the responsibility for the things primarily in the women's sphere, knowing that in the Session and Diaconate are vested now, as in the past, the responsibility for the continual growth of the First Presbyterian Church in the years ahead.

E L D E R S

1846	Joseph Bennett		J. T. Porter
	John C. Atkinson		A. E. Langford
1847	M. A. Lynde	1927	A. M. Leitzell
1857	S. M. Willard (clerk)		C. A. Verbeck
1860	John F. Wheeler		J. B. Neilson
1869	Dr. James W. Smelzer	1935	J. B. Hobson
1873	R. G. Bulgin		W. H. Mapes
1877	John Smith P		B. F. Beckman
	N. D. Woods		J. W. Bone
1880	J. S. Williamson		R. H. Jackson
1882	J. B. Griffing		Collier Wenderoth, Sr.
1884	W. B. Morrow		Roy M. Johnston
	J. M. Tenney		H. P. Warner
	R. A. Caldwell		A. Y. Berry
	Samuel Lawrence		Emmett Vick
1894	J. D. Van Winkle		O. C. Word
1901	Allen D. Morris		W. H. Mapes
	F. J. Klein		Raymond Orr
	Dr. J. S. McCorkle		George Berger
1903	F. S. Read		Mahlon Henley
1906	R. A. Honsberger		Tom Drake
1909	R. A. Shotwell		W. T. Yadon
	L. P. Barkdull		J. R. Woods
1913	A. L. Peacher		Willard C. Smart
	C. E. Warner		J. Stuart Miller
1916	H. C. Read		Frank S. Singleton
	Dr. A. E. Kimmons		Gordon L. Richardson
	Eugene Henderson		W. F. Flowers
	J. A. Barrett		W. S. Wellshear
1918	E. B. Hempstead		Neil Kingsnorth
	Dr. George F. Hynes		John Danner
	B. F. Beckman		Hugh C. Rogers
	W. L. Keister		Thomas C. Fleeman
	William Monroe		Maurice Bedwell, Jr.
1921	W. E. Hinson		
	J. M. Andrews		
	J. B. Williams		
	W. T. Yadon		
1925	C. C. Wheeler		
	E. B. Hempstead		
			Trustees of The Church 1960
			Harry P. Warner
			A. Y. Berry, Sr.
			W. M. Eads, Sr.

D E A C O N S

1848	W. M. Bennett	1924	C. G. Leidy
1857	James H. Sparks		F. F. Ford
1860	Dr. N. K. Shepard	1925	H. A. Olson
1869	B. F. Hershey		Harry Robinson, Sr.
1873	J. N. Hewes		B. A. Singleton
1884	George Sengel		C. R. Vance
1896	T. C. Davis		Scott D. Hamilton
1901	Robert T. Hunt		Lusk Robinson
1906	T. J. Wright		Ben C. Ames
1908	Elvin McLeod		Homer J. Conley
	John H. Carnahan*		J. S. Reynolds
1909	D. E. Dodd		E. H. Patterson
	A. B. Yantis		D. M. Boal
	Len S. O'Neal		M. C. Butler
	W. S. Scott		Thomas H. Hurt
	W. P. Graff		Stanley E. Hayes
1913	H. B. Boyer		Paul K. Heerwagen
	G. W. Young		J. O. Boehm
1916	C. V. Riley		Roy J. Vann
	Marion Hollis		John A. England
1918	F. D. Dunlop		Frank E. Davidson
	P. W. Walker		W. H. Mapes, Jr.
	H. B. Boyer		Stanley M. Gales
1919	Beauford Sengel		King Howard
	Ray Gill		J. B. Taylor
	J. W. Brooks		

*John H. Carnahan was a Deacon of this Church, and the Church Treasurer for thirty-five years. He was also a Trustee for a great part of this period. When ill health forced his resignation as Treasurer in 1944, the Session made him Treasurer Emeritus and an active Deacon for life.

CHURCH SCHOOL OFFICERS

Superintendent: Mr. William S. Sampson
Assistant Superintendent: Dr. Harley C. Darnall
Secretary: Mrs. John Danner

Children's Worker: Mrs. C. A. Jernigan

Nursery Visitor: Mrs. Frank Beckman

Nursery Supervisors: Mrs. E. H. Wilson - Mrs. A. C. Hendricks

Nursery Department: (2 and 3 year olds)

Superintendent—Mrs. Frank Beckman

Mrs. Al Sass

Mrs. Sterling Kellogg

Kindergarten Department: (4 and 5 year olds)

Superintendent—Mrs. Elmer Smith

Mrs. J. W. Durden

Mrs. Donald Hatfield

Primary Department: (1st, 2nd and 3rd Grades)

Superintendent—Mrs. Marshall Thompson

1st Grade—Mrs. Edgar Paul and Mrs. Jim Rutledge

2nd Grade—Miss Nancy Young

3rd Grade—Mrs. W. S. Sampson, Mrs. Eugene Grober, Ned Becker

Junior Department: (4th, 5th and 6th Grades)

Superintendent—Mrs. L. D. Pitts, Jr.

4th Grade—Mrs. Collier Wenderoth, Jr., and Mrs. Ralph Downs

5th Grade—Marshall Thompson, Bill Reynolds, Eugene Grober

6th Grade—Donald Hatfield, Mrs. James Beckman

Pioneer Department: (7th, 8th and 9th Grades)

Superintendent—Dr. Louis Lambiotte

7th Grade—William Eads, Jr.

8th Grade—Dr. Thomas Lamoreux

9th Grade—Collier Wenderoth, Jr.

Senior Department: (10th, 11th and 12th Grades)

Superintendent: Mr. and Mrs. Richard Rockwood

Teachers—Randy Warner, Miss Ed Dell Wortz

Adult Department:

Young Adults: (Young Couples)

Teachers—Lewis Phillips, Jr., Edward Bedwell

Fellowship Class: (Couples)

Teacher—Raymond Orr

Friendship Class: (Business Women)

Teacher—Miss Mildred Watts

Women's Bible Class:

Teacher—Mrs. Harry P. Warner

Men's Bible Class:

Teacher—Mr. Elwood Blass

YOUTH PROGRAM

Senior Hi Fellowship:

Superintendent—Mrs. Mary Julia Head

Sponsors—Mr. and Mrs. Al Hulse, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Roseborough

Advisors—Harold Lobdill and John M. Smith

Pioneer Fellowship:

Superintendent—Mr. and Mrs. Charles Trent

Sponsors—Mr. and Mrs. Selby Hauptert ; Mr. and Mrs. James C. Pierce ; Mr. and Mrs. Ben Noel

Junior-Primary for Family Nites: Mr. and Mrs. Charles Alley, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Townsend

Kindergarten for Family Nites: Mr. and Mrs. William Hunter, Mr. and Mrs. Justin Beneux, Jr.

THE SESSION OFFICERS FOR 1960

Thos. B. Gallaher, Moderator

John T. Barret, Clerk

CLASS THRU 1960

John T. Barret
Ned G. Becker
Frank Beckman
Carey Crane
C. W. Dameron
Harley C. Darnall
David Flinn
Edgar F. Paul
George H. Williams

CLASS THRU 1961

George W. Berger
Tom Cutting
E. Z. Hornberger, Jr.
W. E. Knight
Lester McAleb
Ray E. Patterson
Richar Rockwood
Collier Wenderoth, Jr.
James M. Wilson

CLASS THRU 1962

M. B. Falls
E. Davis Kolb
Louis O. Lambiotte
Paul McCartney
George McGraw
E. Chester Nelson
Raymodn F. Orr
Randolph Sengel
Douglas Walker

INACTIVE: John M. Andrews, Jr., E. J. Barber, A. Y. Berry, Sr., Chris D. Corbin, Dorset Crane, Wm. M. Eads, Sr., W. T. Holmes, C. T. Hubbard, C. L. Hunt, R. H. Jackson, E. H. Noel, Homer C. Norvell, W. S. Sampson, Willard C. Smart, W. A. Stackable, M. P. Thompson, Harry P. Warner, J. Rudolph Woods, O. C. Word.

THE DIACONATE

Robert M. Steele, Chairman
Prentice R. Rice, Vice-Chairman

Harper S. Jackson, Benevolent Treas.
William G. Weeks, Jr., General Treas.

Secretary, Roy H. Vann

CLASS THRU 1960

James S. Beckman
Edward E. Bedwell
John C. Berry
Basil M. Moody
J. L. Patterson
Prentice R. Rice
William G. Weeks, Jr.
Dave H. Speer, Jr.
B. Guler Worden

CLASS THRU 1961

Richard M. Boal
Cooper Hudspeth
A. S. Koenig
A. L. Lambiotte
Paul Sandahl
L. E. Stone
Robert F. Turner
Roy H. Vann
Randolph Warner

CLASS THRU 1962

Degen Boyd
William M. Eads, Jr.
Eugene Grober
J. Franklin Hawkins
Charles A. Jernigan
Thomas C. Lamoreux
William G. Reynolds
Dave H. Speer, Jr.
Robert M. Steele
James A. Winn

INACTIVE: R. D. Beard, Maurice D. Bedwell, Sr., Davis Crane, William Y. Crane, R. B. Cutting, John Hendricks, Harper S. Jackson, E. M. Lambert, W. C. Moore, John D. Olson, Ander K. Orr, Lewis Phillips, Jr., Carl M. Rose, Truss Russell, Robert L. Sherman, Mose Smith, Jr., J. F. Vallery, Ed Warmack, Carl Wortz, Jr.

THE USHERS GUILD

Dr. Cecil F. Boulden
Robert Nichols Cutting
J. Woodrow Durden
John Duey
J. D. Edward
Selby A. Hauptert

Harvey Hopper
John Hvasta
Frank Jamison, Jr.
Dr. Everett Moulton
James Pierce
Ben Noel

Kenneth Pierce
Douglas Rogers
E. B. Sparks, Jr.
Charles Trent
Charles Warner

HOBSON KINDERGARTEN

The Weekday School for Five-Year-Olds

Dean.....Mrs. J. B. Hobson
Teacher.....Mrs. Russell Northup

Director.....Mrs. Chris D. Corbin
Maid.....Maggie Dean

THE BASEBALL TEAM

Coach.....William G. Reynolds

THE PRESBYTERIAN PLAYERS

President.....Mr. Robert M. Steele

THE BOY SCOUTS

Scoutmaster.....William E. Diggs
Asst. Scoutmaster..Chas. McDonald

THE CHURCH LIBRARY

Church Librarians—
.....Mr. and Mrs. T. W. Epperson

THE WOMEN OF THE CHURCH

President.....Mrs. Wm. G. Weeks, Jr.	Recording Sec.....Mrs. R. N. Dills
First Vice-Pres.....Mrs. Ander K. Orr	Corresponding Sec.—
Second Vice-President—Mrs. H. P. Warner
.....Mrs. Collier Wenderoth, Jr.	Treasurer.....Mrs. W. C. Moore
Historian.....Mrs. W. A. Stackable	

THE MEN OF THE CHURCH

President.....Prentice R. Rice	Secretary.....M. B. Falls
Vice-President.....Harvey Hopper	Treasurer.....Basil M. Moody

THE CHURCH STAFF

Minister.....Thos. B. Gallaher, D.D.	Secretary.....Mrs. J. D. Pickering
Director of Christian Education—	Choir Director..Mrs. Jas. M. Wilson
....Mrs. T. C. (Cornelia) Fleeman	Organist.....Mrs. Charles McDonald

Church Phone—SUnset 3-8919



Dr. and Mrs. Thomas B. Gallagher with Sally and Thomas, Jr.



Interior view of First Presbyterian Church 1960 with Dr. Thomas Burke Gallaher

SUMMATION

In darkness dwells a people
That knows its annals not.

Our traditions and history are among our richest inherited possessions. Every nation passes on from generation to generation its faith, convictions and national honor. These are the fabric of our loyalty and our patriotism, interwoven as they are with our pride and integrity as a people. Traditions are a part of our culture and a basis of many of our customs. They affect our concepts and convictions and color much of our emotional life.

Our pioneer ancestors in Arkansas were neither good nor bad. They were, for the most part, the very "salt of the earth." Some of them had good educations for that time. They had courage, ambition and energy, self-discipline and resourcefulness. They came from Virginia, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama and Georgia. They came down the Ohio River from the Northeast. Their roots were planted deep in American soil. They had come to America searching for freedom and fought a long war with England to achieve it. Now they were pushing into new lands of the West. They lived in log cabins with "puncheon" floors—a split log with the flat side up. Modern life with all the things we take for granted was unknown and was not even missed. But they had worthwhile things, religion, common sense, endurance and the faith of pioneers. They had another precious quality—to laugh at themselves. They had time to be neighborly. A basket of early strawberries as a gift to the editor of the local paper brought a public recognition of thanks. A man could pause on his way to the village and admire a neighbor's garden. He knew his neighbors livestock by sight, if not by name, because it roamed at will around the town.

The Spaniards, hunting gold, came and went. The French left behind some names, but the English came to stay. In 1819, with cotton land booming, Arkansas became a Territory and the same year a printing press was brought up the Mississippi River to Arkansas Post at the mouth of the river by that name, and the first issue of the Arkansas Gazette appeared. Mr. William E. Woodruff, editor, paved the way for all the men who followed, recording the events of the day, political, social and personal, thus preserving our history. In 1847 John T. Wheeler issued the first number of the "Fort Smith Herald." This was followed by other papers, but it was "The Elevator" established in 1878 by John Carnall & Company with Mr. J. Frank Weaver as editor, who had a keen appreciation of local history, and reprinted old stories of the town and people, and best of all preserved the newspaper files and filled many scrapbooks. We owe him a great debt for preserving our history so we can re-create scenes of long ago and know "what men did then."

Through the dim history of Fort Smith ride the shadowy figures of Major William Bradford, Colonel Matthew Arbuckle, General

Zachary Taylor, twelfth president of the United States, and his son-in-law Jefferson Davis, first and last President of the Confederate States; General Sam Houston and Talihina, his Indian bride; Sequoyah, Chief of the Cherokees and known to Europeans as "The American Cadmus," because it was he who invented the Cherokee alphabet, one of twelve men in all recorded history who accomplished this miracle; Major B. L. E. Bonneville, famous discoverer of South Pass in the Rockies; Elias Boudinot, Cherokee statesman who next to Sam Houston probably influenced the Five Civilized Tribes more than any other man; Washington Irving, the great novelist; Albert Pike, poet, explorer, and great Mason; Judge I. C. Parker, who presided over the United States Criminal Court in the latter part of the last century. These men and countless others, played their part in developing Our Town and added romantic color to its story.

If they could return—those early citizens—they would find the dream they had of a city growing from the roots they planted a fabulous reality. A city with a population of 53,000 spreading in every direction from the confluence of the Poteau and the Arkansas Rivers. Garrison Avenue is just as wide, but instead of hub deep mud in winter and clouds of dust all summer, they would see a well paved thoroughfare lined with modern buildings. They would have to drive twelve miles to see the new Fort built in 1941-1942. It was called Fort Chaffee in honor of Major General Adna Romanza Chaffee, who is known as the father of the Armored Command. General W. H. H. Morris, Jr., was the first commander. He was responsible for training the Sixth Armored Division, followed by others who trained the Fourteenth and Sixteenth Armored Divisions. These young men, joining others, took their places in the lines all over the world to fight to preserve our freedom and the things we hold dear. They also joined their fallen comrades of other years, and other wars—Revolutionary, War of 1812, Mexican War, Civil War, Spanish American War, World Wars I and II and the Korean War, some of them to rest forever in the National Cemetery in Fort Smith. The tradition of Army life has always been part of our heritage.

These early settlers would find only one building still standing just as it was about 1838—the Old Commissary building with its sturdy gray stone walls rising like a monument to the men who built the second Fort. It is preserved as a museum, housing many early relics and papers. Mrs. George Lyman was the first president of the board, followed by other ladies in the last fifty years, who have developed it into one of the outstanding museums in the country.

In 1955 Circuit Judge Paul Wolfe, President of Public Historical Restorations, Inc., with a committee of twenty-five, restored Judge I. C. Parker's famous courtroom in a building built in 1840 as a barracks for two companies of soldiers. Mr. Chester Nelson was the architect and the project was completed in 1957. On the grounds of the Convent of Mercy at the east end of Garrison Avenue, the Nuns have made a triple grotto of the chimney of General Zachary Taylor's house, used during the occupation of Cantonment Bel-

knap, in which they have placed statues of the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph and St. Aloysius, Patron Saint of Youth. A lovely garden is planted around the base of it.

It has been one hundred and twenty-four years since the State of Arkansas joined the Union, and the city of Fort Smith is one hundred and eighteen years old—quite youthful in the eyes of the older settled sections of the United States—but old enough to have acquired some of the dignity accruing with the passage of time. Celebrations commemorating one hundred years of church history in Our Town have been observed by the Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Methodists, Lutherans, Christians and Baptists. Their beautiful buildings are an inspiration to all who see them. To know the early struggles and sacrifices of the people who built them, give them a special place in our hearts.

We observed the State Centennial in 1936 with celebrations and all the excitement such a momentous occasion deserves, but the year Fort Smith should have taken notice of the event that made it an incorporated town one hundred years before—in 1842 by 1942 the country was at war and if any one remembered the birthday at all it was a passing thought.

September 1958, the centennial anniversary of the arrival of the Butterfield Overland Mail, was re-enacted as near like the first celebration as it was possible to make it. In this motorized age, the arrival of a replica of the first stage, caused as much excitement as it did one hundred years before. Descendants of those first pioneers were present to dedicate a commemorative marker on the lawn of the Old Commissary Museum. Miss Ed Louise Ballman was President of the Board. Judge Paul Wolfe was chairman of the celebration. Miss Virginia Foster, Mrs. Ashley Johnson and Mr. Ed Bedwell were the marker committee. Mrs. Heber Denman, a descendant of the Arbuckle family; Ben Johnston's three children; Lucy Sicard, whose great grandfather was Samuel McCloud; Mrs. Burley Johnston, who was a DuVal; Ed Dell Haglin Wortz; Mrs. Mary Parke Taylor; the Sengels and some connections of the Barling and Bonneville families; Mrs. Degen Boyd, descendant of Captain John Rogers; Mrs. Helen Cooke Johnson, whose grandfather gave the address at the picnic in 1858 at the first celebration, these and many more dressed in period costumes were present to recreate a memory. Rev. Elmo Thomason, President of the Ministerial Association (Minister at Goddard Memorial Methodist Church) gave the Invocation and Rev. Otto P. Butterback of Christ the King Catholic Church, the Benediction.

For 143 years people have lived on Belle Point, though the town itself grew away. The group assembled on the historic lawn of the old building, could look across the river to our neighbor state of Oklahoma and be thankful we were forging another link with the past.

During the winter of 1958-1959, with the aid of Lieutenant Clyde Dollar, Jr., an amateur archaeologist, and under the direction

of Public Historical Restoration, Inc., the stone foundations of the first little stockade Fort, built in 1817, were discovered on Belle Point. Though part of the beautiful point was blasted away to provide stone for the second Fort, its contour was not destroyed. The river has changed its course in many places in this section, but it still flows past the original point—La Belle Pointe—as it has in countless ages past.

Members of all churches have felt a responsibility to serve, not only the church, but the community in which they live. This service has never been given a name in Our Town, but it is Christian Brotherhood working unselfishly in its truest sense, regardless of creed. One will find it in all civic groups working together to send hundreds of children to summer camps, establish a home for older citizens, to help the schools, serve on hospital boards or with a group directed by Mr. R. K. Rodgers to clean up a slum area known as Coke Hill. Countless hours have been given to preserve and restore our local history.

We feel this spirit of helping each other has manifested itself in many ways, always developing, improving and growing. We are known for many things but we take the greatest pride perhaps in being known as the city of Churches, more than ninety congregations, an amazing growth which started with little St. Patrick's Catholic Church and three Protestant demonimations.

Now we have almost come to the end of this period in our history. We pay tribute to all who paved the way for us—to the early priests who first planted the Cross in a wilderness and to all the dedicated men who followed in their footsteps "protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty, property and the religion which they professed." The pioneer minister worked hard to grub a living for himself and family from raw land, his total income from preaching probably less than one hundred dollars a year. He traveled many miles to preach in some log cabin or to visit the sick and bury the dead.

Cumberland Gap on the border of Kentucky and Tennessee gained a place in American history as one of the main pathways by which emigrants crossed the mountains into Kentucky, Tennessee and Arkansas. Some of Arkansas' earliest overland pioneers came through the Gap, among them leaders in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, which came out of the great Cumberland country revival of 1800. These pioneers settled first on the Arkansas River in central Arkansas and then moved north into Washington County.

There can be no more Cumberland Gaps in this country. We have long since explored and settled the continent from ocean to ocean, from border to border. From here on our pioneering will be done in outer space. But it is a good thing in such a breathtaking age to remember the vision and courage of the men and women who first pushed across our country and how they came.

It is strange that there is a recurring theme in each generation. An inscription found on an ancient Egyptian tomb expresses it in simple words, "We are living in a dying and decadent age, youth is corrupt, lacking in respect for elders, impatient of restraint. Age-old truth is doubted, and the teaching of the fathers questioned. The signs of the times forecast the destruction of the world at an early date, and the end of time." This inscription was written more than two thousand years ago.

More than at any time in the recorded history of the world, man is faced with almost unbearable problems and decisions. We are in truth facing a new age, the age of space. We were given the key to all life and hope and salvation when God sent his Son to show us the way. We were given a simple set of ten laws to guide us. We are forever grateful for the firm foundation of our past heritage. With God's grace and love, we shall be able to face the future with courage. We pray:

*To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and
majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever.
Amen.*

Jude I:25

EPILOGUE

Dear Reader:

It was in June 1958 when we started compiling this book. We make no apologies for it, but we would like for you to bear in mind the fact that this is our first attempt at writing one. We have omitted some events we should have included, and added some a few people will think we should have omitted. We had a good story to tell and in our eagerness to tell it, a participle might dangle out of place and an infinitive be split, to say nothing of all the other unexpected pitfalls. We had the people. Through ties of marriage and mutual interest in each other we could not place them in separate categories.

We became involved in the political fortunes of the State and Nation. We inherited a Southern tradition. Since our individual family histories date back about one hundred and twenty-five years in the State, we stressed the Southern viewpoint; first, because our Church grew out of the separation during the War Between the States; second, because this Southern history is close to our hearts.

Two years have passed. Now in 1960 we find ourselves approaching another centennial, that of 1861 when our Southern Church was organized the first year of the War Between the States. It is with love and affection we present this little book for your enjoyment and to tell you again why we have shared the early history of the First Presbyterian Church with the other churches in Fort Smith.

Virginia Louise Foster

Sydney Yantis Warner

